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AUTHOR Smith, Gerald R.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

Findings of a study that compared educational theorists' and practitioners' thinking about school restructuring are presented in this paper. A questionnaire mailed to 43 theorists elicited 27 responses, a 63 percent response rate. The same questionnaire was completed by 131 principals, 95 teachers, and 12 other school personnel from 129 out of 178 schools in 30 states, a 67 percent response rate. Findings affirm the grassroots nature of restructuring leadership. Except for student achievement, which was ranked first by both groups, there was no common agreement about restructuring goals. Theorists tended to be more pessimistic than the principals and teachers about the educational change process. Practitioners' reported that their daily experiences made them aware of the need to think about schooling in new ways; none of the theorists mentioned this theme. Practitioners expressed new understandings of school-based decision making, involving collaborative partnerships. Fifteen tables are included. Appendices contain a copy of the survey and statistical rankings. (Contains 35 references.) (LMI)

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RESTRUCTURING PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

THEORISTS VERSUS PRACTITIONERS

Indiana University
1992

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RESTRUCTURING PUBLIC SCHOOLS: THEORISTS VERSUS PRACTITIONERS

Research Report

by

Gerald R. Smith, Barbara Tourgee,
Marsha Turner, Carl Lashley, and Lee Lashley

May 27, 1992

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROBLEM AND PROCEDURES 1

REVIEW OF LITERATURE 6

RESULTS
- Participants 13
- Restructuring Efforts 15
- Restructuring and Reform 17
- Needs, Problems, Issues 22
- Sources of Ideas 24
- Paradigms for Restructuring 25
- Goals of Restructuring 26
- Focus of Restructuring 27
- Barriers to Restructuring 28
- Who Participates, Who Benefits 29
- Success of Restructuring Efforts 34
- Reservations About Restructuring 34
- New Understandings of Public Schooling 43

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS 55

REFERENCES 65

LIST OF TABLES
- Table 1: Participants 14
- Table 2: Restructuring Efforts 16
- Table 3: Restructuring and Reform 17
- Table 4: Needs, Problems, Issues 22
- Table 5: Sources of Ideas 24
- Table 6: Paradigms for Restructuring 25
- Table 7: Goals of Restructuring 26
- Table 8: Focus of Restructuring 28
- Table 9: Barriers to Restructuring 29
- Table 10: High Involvement of Groups 31
- Table 11: Low Involvement of Groups 32
- Table 12: Who Benefits 33
- Table 13: Success of Restructuring Efforts 34
- Table 14: Reservations About Restructuring 35
- Table 15: New Understandings of Public Schooling 44

APPENDICES 69
- Appendix A: Survey Form
- Appendix B: Participation of Groups: Practitioners' Views
- Appendix C: Participation of Groups: Theorists' Views

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Finally, we hope the results of this study of restructuring offer useful assistance to the many parents, teachers, and administrators who are earnestly seeking to improve their schools.

PROBLEM AND PROCEDURES

The latest round of reform in education is described as an effort to restructure public schools. The exact meaning of restructuring varies considerably from expert to expert writing about it and from school to school engaging in it. Some observers - Albert Shanker, for example - have asserted that past efforts at innovation have tended to reform and refine the existing system of public schooling while keeping the fundamental beliefs about and practices of schooling intact. For Shanker and others, restructuring is an effort that is trying to change the basic beliefs about the nature of schooling and its practices as well.

Definitions of Restructuring

While there is no single agreed upon definition of restructuring, there are components that are common to several definitions. They typically include the following:

(1) Greater teacher student contact (Sizer, 1984)

(2) Greater authority to the school (Boyer, 1989; Barth, 1990)

  (a) Site-based management

  (b) Shared decision making

(3) Restructuring of the curriculum (English and Hill, 1990)

(4) Major changes in instruction (e.g. individualization, cooperative learning, etc.) (Crabbe, 1989)

(5) Greater autonomy for teachers (Lewis, 1990)

(6) Professional working conditions for teachers (Little, 1989)

(7) Learning Communities - Teams of teachers and paraprofessionals developing a continuing relationship with a specific group of students and guided by lead teachers (Dodd and Rosenbaum, 1986)

(8) Incentives and rewards as motivational tools for restructuring (Shanker, 1990)

(9) Alternative forms of assessment to tests and grading (Coalition of Essential Schools, 1990)

(10) Changing the roles and functions of the central office (Miller, 1988)

(11) Small sized schools or programs within schools (Boyer, 1989; Gregory and Smith, 1987)

(12) Reorganizing governance at district level (Lewis, 1990)

Clearly, these are not the only components of the restructuring models discussed in the literature, but they do represent some of the most commonly mentioned ones. No argument is being made that every model or discussion of restructuring includes all of these components.

While complete agreement about the nature of restructuring is lacking, there is agreement on the need for it from professionals (Sizer, 1984), union officials (Shanker, 1990), government officials (National Governor's Association, 1986), and knowledgeable lay persons (Kearns and Doyle, 1988). The specifics of need are many, but a few illustrations will provide ample demonstration. At a recent conference, a teacher from a midwestern city said, "Our high school has a graduation rate of 54% and we have the best record in the city." According to Issues in Education (no date), a U.S. Department of Education newsletter, the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS-88) of 25,000 students reported that teachers found one in five students in the eighth grade to be inattentive, arriving at school without pencil and paper and without a finished homework assignment. Nearly half of the students said they were bored at least half of the time in school.

The same study revealed that at least one out of three eighth graders report that tardiness, absenteeism, and cutting class are moderate to serious problems, and about 40% of eighth graders report that class disruptions by other students often get in the way of learning. These students are not yet in high school, but we know that the situation does not improve through the high school years. If anything, it gets worse.

Boyer (1983) in his report on secondary education documented several problems with U.S. high schools, including dropping SAT and ACT scores, little change in writing proficiency from 1969-1979, little change in mathematics knowledge and skills from 1978-1982, and declining scores in the Iowa Test of Educational Development in grades 9-12 from 1962-1981. Moreover,

according to recent statistics cited by Barry Garfinkel, Director of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Minnesota in an interview with Jack Frymier (1988), over the last 30 years, the number of U.S. youth who commit suicide has jumped 300%. While the schools are but one factor in this phenomenon, they are certainly not reducing the alienation experienced by high school students.

High schools have not served students well for some years, but now they are no longer serving teachers well either. In a recent Gallup Poll (Elam, 1989), for example, teachers expressed the belief that they should have more control over 10 separate aspects of school life than they believe they actually do. Teachers' responses to several other items leave the reader with the distinct impression that teaching is low prestige work that many teachers would not recommend to their own sons and daughters.

Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of this study was to compare the thinking about restructuring of educational theorists - those who write about restructuring - with the thinking of practitioners - teachers and administrators who are trying to implement restructuring. The terms "theorist" and "practitioner" have been used to refer to these two groups throughout this report.

Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions:

(a) What is the focus of restructuring - that is, what is it that is being restructured?

(b) What are the implicit and explicit assumptions underlying the conceptions of restructuring expressed by these two groups?

(c) What needs, problems, and issues are thought to be addressed?

(d) What goals/objectives are to be attained?

(e) What are the primary obstacles to restructuring as viewed by each group?

(f) Does either group view attempts to restructure as reinforcing existing beliefs and practices of schooling (old paradigm thinking) or as moving toward one or more new paradigms of schooling?

Procedures

A questionnaire was developed to collect the views of practitioners (teachers and administrators) and theorists (those who had written about restructuring). It asked 22 questions of both groups, including topics such as the school focus of restructuring (within a single school or schools or across a district), the level (elementary, middle/junior high, or high school), the goals to be achieved, the educational focus (e.g., curriculum and instruction, decision making, resource allocation), barriers, judgment of success, assumptions, extent of involvement of different stakeholders, and the people who benefitted most and least. Two questions about their personal reservations and how restructuring had changed their understanding of schools called for written comments from respondents. In addition, a number of demographic and personal involvement questions were included. The complete questionnaire is shown in Appendix A to this report.

Most of the questionnaire items addressed the six themes embedded in the questions stated earlier: 1) the focus of restructuring, 2) implicit and explicit assumptions, 3) needs, problems, issues addressed, 4) goals/objectives, 5) obstacles to restructuring, and 6) models or paradigms.

The questionnaire was mailed to 43 theorists and 178 schools. The theorists were identified as those who had written articles or books (not including dissertations) on restructuring over the eight year period from 1983-1991. The practitioners were chosen from schools that were reputed to be engaged in restructuring. A list of schools was generated from citations in the educational literature, networks of schools such as Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools, NEA's Mastery in Learning Schools, state education departments, Reigeluth's (1991) study of restructuring schools, and other sources (media, personal contacts, etc.). Since all of these schools were reputed to be restructuring, the sample of practitioners was not a random sample from all of the schools in the country; rather it definitely favored those individuals who were interested and active in restructuring.

Two questionnaires were sent to each school - one for the principal to complete and another for him/her to pass along to a teacher who had participated in the restructuring effort. One hundred thirty-one administrators, 95 teachers, and 12 other school personnel responded to the survey for a

total of 238 practitioner responses (a return rate of 67%) representing 129 schools from 30 states. Twenty-seven of the 43 theorists returned surveys for a return rate of 63%.

Responses were requested in two mailings - one in April, 1991 and another in September, 1991. After the first mailing, telephone calls were made to potential participants to encourage them to return their surveys. Response data were tabulated for practitioners and theorists separately. Since not all participants answered every item, there was some variability in the total number of responses to the questions. Participants' responses and the number of those who did not respond to an item are reported in the discussion of the items. Percentages for response categories were based on the number of participants who responded to each item.

Some items asked participants to check all appropriate responses. Percentages were calculated by dividing the number of participants who checked each of these responses by the total number of participants who completed the item. Since practitioners and theorists responded separately to the survey, their responses were not aggregated.

Some items produced a fairly lengthy list of response categories. To make it easier to compare theorists' and practitioners' responses, we calculated ranks (based upon frequency of responses) and included them in the appropriate tables.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Restructuring is a nebulous concept with no one meaning. Thus, it is a term that is difficult to define. Although some might argue that this lack of a single definition is a weakness in the movement for restructuring, it can in fact be an advantage. As Harvey and Crandall (1988) argue, "the concept itself suggests and supports multiple alternatives" (p. 1). These "multiple alternatives" are not only desirable but absolutely necessary in any attempt to effect meaningful change in American public education. If the past 100 years of school reform attempts have taught us anything, it is that there is no single solution to the problems inherent in a system of education as vast and complex as ours.

Despite the lack of a single definition for restructuring, the literature does reveal some recurring themes. For example, Shanker (1990) asserts that restructuring implies a complete rethinking of the educational process, rather than the tinkering with the present system involved in previous school reform initiatives. This view is adopted by many who write about reform, including Harvey and Crandall (1988), who argue, "Restructuring is not adding more of the same, tinkering around the edges, even making significant improvement to the current structure" (p. 1). The perception of restructuring as systemic rather than piecemeal is stressed by Timar (1989), who further describes it as a "radical overhaul" (p. 266) of the current system.

Just as there is no one definition of restructuring, neither is there a list of components which are always present in any restructuring effort. However, throughout the literature we find mention of new configurations of time, space, and student grouping, as well as enhanced roles for teachers. According to Elmore (1990), "Political debate about restructuring has centered on the themes of empowerment, accountability, and academic learning" (p. 5). In addition, Newmann (1991) lists "greater use of technology" (p. 463) as a component of restructuring.

One of the first restructuring ideas to gain national attention, and one which incorporates many of the components listed above, is the "school within a school" model (Timar, 1989, p. 270), which usually involves a team of teachers from various disciplines who work with the same group of students all day, all year, and often throughout the students' years at the school. This

teaming of teachers and students creates a sense of community, which is often missing in large schools. Because the teachers work as a team, they usually have discretionary authority to arrange the schedule as they see fit, varying the amount of time spent on each subject from day to day as needed. This flexible scheduling allows for more opportunities for students to go outside the school, extending the learning environment into the community (Newmann, 1991).

For teachers, working in teams ends the isolation of traditional classrooms and provides for greater collegiality (O'Neil, 1989); the benefits for students include a greater opportunity to see connections among all of their studies through integration of all facets of the curriculum. In some restructured schools, this integration has gone so far as to team special education and regular classroom teachers, thus allowing special needs students to come out of their traditionally isolated programs (Berreth, 1988). Multi-age grouping is another restructuring component, especially at the elementary level (Jenkins and Houlihan, 1990). Sizer (1984) also argues for new grouping strategies at the high school level, including the elimination of academic, general, and basic tracking.

Finding alternatives to traditional methods of assessment and evaluation of students, professional staff, and of the restructuring program itself is another component of many restructuring efforts (Newmann, 1991; Sizer, 1984). Alternatives to traditional paper and pencil tests for student assessment include portfolios that follow students from year to year, individual and team projects, and end-of-year exhibitions.

Another common element of school restructuring is the provision of ways for local schools to escape the labyrinth of state mandates and regulations. Jenkins and Houlihan (1990) point out that this labyrinth also extends to the local bureaucracy of central office administration and stifling school board policy. Ernest Boyer, head of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, cites school-based management as a necessary component of any national school reform movement (Boyer, 1989).

Because restructuring has no single meaning, there can be no list of prescribed steps that will lead to a restructured school. Still, there is some agreement among theorists and practitioners

as to some procedures that are typically followed in a restructuring effort. For example, it is crucial that those who set out to restructure a school or district begin by looking at the available research in order to create a clear vision of the outcomes they wish to bring about (Harvey and Crandall, 1988). Restructuring leaders (whether they be teachers, principals, central office administrators, or university researchers) can then articulate this vision to those who will implement the restructuring effort and thus bring about the desired outcomes. In an interview published in Educational Leadership (Brandt, 1990), Shanker advises these leaders to "get some ideas, pull together a group of like-minded people, ask for a corner of the school, and see if you can sell the idea to some parents and students" (p. 15). Taking another point of view, Gomez (1989) argues that a restructuring proposal must be endorsed by a significant portion of the faculty if it is to be successful. These are not contradictory ideas, of course, because one author (Gomez) is thinking of the entire school and the other (Shanker) is trying to encourage a small group within a school. Both are viable change strategies.

Once a group has accepted a restructuring vision, Jenkins and Houlihan (1990) suggest that a period of debate is needed to work out the finer points of the project's goals. Another important consideration, according to the Council of Chief State School Officers (1989), is the provision of a system of rewards or incentives for obtaining the desired outcomes.

Some of the principal goals of restructuring efforts involve changes in teachers' roles and school organization, changes in curriculum and student achievement, and increased parent or community involvement. The Council of Chief State School Officers (1989) states that a major objective of restructuring is "decentralization of authority to the school site" (p. 9) to "encourage and support the development of management systems that provide increased autonomy and discretion for school-based professionals" (p. 12). Toward this aim, many states have provided short-cuts for schools seeking waivers from state mandates and regulations. O'Neil (1989) argues that a major goal of restructuring is to "completely reshape a system that has been measured thus far by compliance with bureaucratic mandates into one focused on the bottom-line--evidence of authentic student achievement" (p. 8). Not only decision-making, but also resources (including

financial resources), must be focused at the school level in order for true restructuring to be accomplished (Gomez, 1989).

In terms of improving student achievement, critical thinking skills are frequently mentioned as a goal of restructuring. Pipho (1989) describes this goal as "helping students become performing thinkers, problem solvers, and inquirers" (p. 263). To move toward this objective, the Capital Area School Development Association (CASDA), in its report of the Select Seminar on Excellence in Education (1987), asserts that schools must teach students not to fear failure, but to learn from their mistakes. This is quite a departure from the traditional view that failure in school is to be avoided and feared.

Increasing parent and community involvement in local education is another goal of many restructuring efforts. The Council of Chief State School Officers (1989) calls for members of local communities to become participants, rather than spectators, in their schools.

Among those who write about restructuring, the need for substantive change in American public education is an important philosophy held by both theorists and practitioners. As Urbanski (1988) states, "The problem with schools is that they are precisely what they always were" (p. 48). This view that there has been no true educational reform in the 20th century has gained proponents in recent years. As the American student population has changed, it has become clear that "traditional schooling does not adequately serve an increasingly large proportion of students" (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1989, p. 9). To meet the needs of the increasing number of minority and limited English-speaking students, we must look for new models of organization for our schools. Lieberman, et al.(1991) add, "While today's schools are geared to uniformity, passivity, and order, massive change in our world calls out for diversity, initiative, and inventiveness" (p. 1).

The need for change in the roles of teachers in the school organization is another philosophical assumption underlying much of the literature on restructuring. Jenkins and Houlihan (1990) call for "a new sense of professionalism," (p. 27) and Timar (1989) adds that "attracting, holding, and enlivening the best teachers means 'professionalizing' the occupation by granting

more authority to teachers....Prideful teachers will create a profession that good people will want to join" (p. 267). This move toward professionalization seems to result in greater trust in teachers' knowledge and respect for their important roles in the change process. As Klauke (1989) writes, "teachers, as repositories of first-hand experience, are the primary agents of change" (p. 2).

Although much of the literature on restructuring points to particular pieces of the school organization (i.e. student achievement and teacher roles), an important assumption underlying Shanker's work is that restructuring "requires rethinking all of our assumptions about schools, from the eggcrate organization to the concept of class size, from age-grading to uses of teachers' time" (Shanker, 1990, p. 348). Urbanski (1988) adds, "We must reconsider how we allocate time, use space, classify students, and divide subject matter" (p. 50).

Because such a total rethinking of our current system is an important underlying assumption of restructuring, the process cannot be neatly packaged and will differ from school to school. There can be no formula for such substantive change, for each school or community faces its own particular problems and issues. Thus, as Klauke (1989) states, "Restructuring that begins at the local level is best able to send tremors of positive change throughout the deep structure" (p. 6).

As stated earlier, restructuring is a broad concept with numerous definitions, a fact which makes it even more crucial that local schools and districts make restructuring their own by interpreting the copious literature on the topic. Urbanski (1988) suggests that the challenge facing practitioners involved in restructuring is "to translate the abundant rhetoric into local practical reality" (p. 48). Nor can any one school prescribe its restructuring plan as <u>the</u> way to restructuring. As argued in the CASDA (1987) report, each group of educators involved in a restructuring effort "must go through a process and find for themselves their own truths, their own visions" (p. 29). However, this view could be problematic if taken to the extreme of viewing restructuring <u>only</u> as a local phenomenon. The danger then, according to Elmore (1990), is that the movement will be nothing more than "a scattered collection of isolated experiments without a coherent set of themes" (p. 295).

Still, true change does not result from "gimmicks or strategies," writes Lieberman (1990), "but [from] ways of thinking of teaching, learning, and professionalism" (p. 532). To accomplish such change, "we must question even the most hallowed practices and assumptions" (Urbanski, 1988, p. 50). To assure that this change will be meaningful and on-going, "schools must be restructured as centers of inquiry and reflection" (p. 48).

One of the most valuable outcomes of restructuring so far has been the growing sense of collegiality among teachers. Berreth (1988) reports an increase in teachers' sharing of ideas for "teaching strategies and curriculum design and organizational skills," not only among teachers in similar fields but even among regular and special education teachers (p. 45). Timar (1989) echoes this outcome, stating that restructuring efforts have "presented opportunities to develop closer professional relationships with other teachers, to focus on curriculum and teaching, to expand professional roles by engaging in curriculum development, and to improve professional competence" (p. 270). These improving professional relationships have also extended in many cases to principals, often ending the isolation of the principal's office and changing what Timar (1989) calls the "adversarial relationship between teachers and administrators" (p. 271).

Greater communication among faculty leads to greater integration of the curriculum, another documented outcome of restructuring (Timar, 1989). In addition, O'Neil (1989) reports that seeking waivers for district regulations in Dade County, Florida, led to the establishment of " 'satellite learning centers' at the offices of several large employers" (p. 7). Such outcomes as this are making schools "places where meaningful change and cooperative problem-solving and decision-making are the norms" (MacPhail-Wilcox, Forbes, and Parramore, 1990, p. 25).

One of the barriers to restructuring most often mentioned in the literature is what Timar (1989) calls "entangling [restructuring] efforts in endless rules and procedural details" (p. 271). The usual source of these rules is state regulations and mandates, which are beyond the control of the local teachers and administrators involved in restructuring. However, another source of stifling procedural details can be the district central office, especially in larger districts. Restructuring efforts often involve changing patterns of decision making, thereby threatening the authority of

district personnel (Berreth, 1988).

Another barrier to restructuring cited by Timar (1989) is the lack of a "broad consensus about the purpose of schooling," which often results in "a patchwork of programs" rather than a well-planned effort built on a clear vision (p. 275). The Council of Chief State School Officers (1989) reiterates this barrier to restructuring, stating that concentrated efforts on pilot programs are "insufficient in themselves" (p. 52). In addition to the focus of most restructuring efforts on single schools or districts, Timar (1989) also argues that even within schools involved in restructuring efforts, the support is often limited to teachers who are actually involved in the program, making any changes that result marginal and "easily erased" (p. 275).

Barriers to restructuring also include teachers' firmly entrenched perceptions of their traditional roles. Building new collaborative roles and finding new instructional techniques take extra time and effort and may thus contribute to teachers' loss of commitment to the restructuring effort (Taylor and Levine, 1991; Newmann, 1991). Teachers are not alone in their reluctance to give up familiar methods of education. Timar (1989) points out that parents as well have come to expect certain procedures and rituals in their children's education. Any efforts to change these familiar patterns are destined to meet some degree of resistance, even in the best of circumstances.

RESULTS

Questionnaires were mailed to 43 theorists and 178 schools. Responses were requested from the principal and a teacher from each school for a total potential number of school responses of 356. A total of 238 practitioners responded from 129 schools in 30 states for a response rate of 67%. Twenty-seven theorists provided useful responses for a response rate of 63%.

Participants

Of the 238 practitioners, 131 identified themselves as administrators, 95 as teachers, and 12 as other. Table 1 delineates age, sex, employment, role, whether the participants have written about restructuring, and participants' assessments of their own knowledge about restructuring.

The largest proportion of theorists (37%) are in the 60+ age category. The remaining theorists fall about equally into the other three age categories. None of the theorists are in the youngest age category, 21-30. In light of current demographic trends, this is not surprising, since the theorists are largely university professors or researchers. On the whole, practitioners are younger than theorists. The largest portion (47%) are in the 41-50 age category with equal portions falling above and below this age group.

Well over half of the responding theorists are male (63%). Again, this male majority is representative of the population from which the theorists were chosen. A nearly equal percentage of practitioners (57%) are female. Seventy-seven of the 95 (81%) teachers are women; forty-nine of 131 (37%) administrators are women; and 10 of 12 (83%) participants who classified their role as "other" are women.

A high percentage in the theorists' group (81%) work in a college or university setting. The two most common role descriptions among theorists were teacher (33%) and researcher (52%). Not surprisingly, over 99% of practitioners identified a school system as their primary place of employment. Indeed, the practitioners in this group were chosen because of their involvement in building-level restructuring efforts. The majority of practitioners are building administrators, almost 40% are classroom teachers.

Table 1: The Participants

Category	Practitioners (n=238) Number	Percent	Theorists (n=27) Number	Percent
Age				
21-30	7	2.94%	0	0.00%
31-40	55	23.11%	6	22.22%
41-50	113	47.48%	5	18.52%
51-60	55	23.11%	5	18.52%
60+	8	3.36%	10	37.04%
No Response	0	0.00%	1	3.70%
Total	238	100.00%	27	100.00%
Sex				
Female	136	57.14%	10	37.04%
Male	99	41.60%	17	62.96%
No Response	3	1.26%	0	0.00%
Total	238	100.00%	27	100.00%
Primary Place of Employment				
School System	236	99.16%	4	14.81%
College or University	0	0.00%	22	81.48%
Other	2	0.84%	1	3.70%
Total	238	100.00%	27	99.99%
Role				
Teacher	95	39.92%	9	33.33%
Administrator	131	55.04%	3	11.11%
Researcher	0	0.00%	14	51.85%
Other	12	5.04%	0	0.00%
No Response	0	0.00%	1	3.70%
Total	238	100.00%	27	99.99%
Written About Restructuring				
Yes	41	17.23%	24	88.89%
No	195	81.93%	3	11.11%
No Response	2	0.84%	0	0.00%
Total	238	100.00%	27	100.00%
Knowledge About Restructuring				
Well Above Average	56	23.53%	18	66.67%
Above Average	111	46.64%	7	25.93%
Average	63	26.47%	1	3.70%
Below Average	7	2.94%	0	0.00%
Well Below Average	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
No Response	1	0.42%	1	3.70%
Total	238	100.00%	27	100.00%

Many (89%) of the theorists had written articles, papers, or books about restructuring schools. Most of the theorists were identified as potential participants for this study through their writings on restructuring. Over 80% of practitioners indicated they had not written about their

experience in restructuring schools.

When asked about how knowledgeable they consider themselves about restructuring public schools, 67% of the theorists rated their knowledge of restructuring as well above average and 26% rated their knowledge as above average. Practitioners (70%) generally consider themselves to be well above average or above average in their knowledge about the restructuring of public schools.

Restructuring Efforts

Participants were asked whether they were currently involved in a restructuring effort and whether that effort had prescribed time limits or was ongoing. In addition, participants were asked about the locus and level of most public school restructuring efforts. Table 2 delineates participants' responses to these questions.

Two-thirds of the theorists and 94% of the practitioners indicated that they were currently involved in a specific effort to restructure public schools. Of the eighteen theorists who indicated that they were currently involved, sixteen (89%) indicated that the effort was one which would continue over several years. Only one indicated that the restructuring effort had finite beginning and ending dates. Nearly all practitioners (89%) responded that the restructuring effort in which they were involved was a continuing effort over several years, thus indicating that restructuring was viewed as a process in which schools engage, rather than a project with finite timelines and outcomes.

Over 40% of the theorists identified one school as the focus of most restructuring efforts, while the remainder were about equally divided between those who saw the focus of restructuring efforts as two or more schools (22%) and those who saw the focus as an entire district (19%). One theorist perceived most restructuring efforts as "still focused on small bands of individuals," indicating a narrow focus. This might refer to efforts begun by a few teachers within a building or

Table 2: Restructuring Efforts

Category	Practitioners (n=238) Number	Percent	Theorists (n=27) Number	Percent
Involved in a Restructuring Effort				
Yes	224	94.12%	18	66.67%
No	14	5.88%	9	33.33%
Total	238	100.00%	27	100.00%
Describe the Restructuring Effort				
A finite project	10	4.20%	1	3.70%
A continuing effort	212	89.08%	16	59.26%
No Response	16	6.72%	10	37.04%
Total	238	100.00%	27	100.00%
Focus of Most Restructuring Efforts				
Within a school	145	60.92%	11	40.74%
Within two or more schools	21	8.82%	6	22.22%
Across a district	60	25.21%	5	18.52%
Other	8	3.36%	3	11.11%
No Response	4	1.68%	2	7.41%
Total	238	99.99%	27	100.00%
Level of Most Restructuring Efforts				
Elementary	62	26.05%	6	22.22%
Elementary & Middle	59	24.79%	8	29.63%
Middle	20	8.40%	0	0.00%
Middle & High	28	11.76%	6	22.22%
High School	26	10.92%	1	3.70%
Other	28	11.76%	2	7.41%
No Response	15	6.30%	4	14.81%
Total	238	99.98%	27	99.99%

perhaps by a building-level administrator. Another theorist described the focus as "networks of schools connected to a particular reform effort." This could refer to efforts, such as Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools, in which several schools across the country employ similar principles in their individual schools, or it could refer to more informal, loosely connected networking among schools involved in restructuring.

Because practitioners were identified through their own school restructuring efforts, it is not surprising that three-fifths (61%) of practitioners responded that most public school restructuring efforts were focused within a school. One-fourth (25%) indicated that restructuring efforts were focused across a district. A majority of responses in both groups favored elementary and middle schools as the levels where most restructuring efforts took place.

Restructuring and Reform

Participants were asked to judge whether restructuring and reform were "roughly the same," or "quite different." Those who chose the latter, were asked to describe the differences. Table 3 details their responses and the subsequent narrative summarizes their written comments. A higher percentage of both theorists and practitioners judged that reform and restructuring were quite different. However, theorists were nearly evenly divided on the issue (Thirty-seven percent said "roughly the same" and 41%, "quite different"), whereas nearly twice as many practitioners said they were quite different (59% to 32%).

Table 3: Restructuring and Reform

	Practitioners (n=238)		Theorists (n=27)	
Compare Restructuring and Reform	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
They are roughly the same.	77	32.35%	10	37.04%
They are quite different	141	59.24%	11	40.74%
No Response	20	8.40%	6	22.22%
Total	238	99.99%	27	100.00%

Participants who responded that reform and restructuring were quite different were asked to describe this difference. One hundred forty-one practitioners (59% of those responding) and 11 theorists (41% of those responding) provided a description of the difference between reform and restructuring. The practitioners gave a wider variety of responses, and all but two were grouped into the following categories:

1) Reform is piecemeal maintenance; restructuring is systemic change.
2) Reform is mandated from without; restructuring arises from within the school.
3) Reform is top down; restructuring is bottom up.
4) Reform and restructuring are similar terms. There is little point served in getting "hung up" on terms.

5) The opinions of this group were generally counter to the others. They thought of reform as others thought of restructuring and vice versa.

All but one of the theorists' responses fit into three of these groups: #1, #4, and #5. An analysis of each category will be helpful in understanding its content.

Piecemeal Maintenance vs. Systemic Change

A substantial number of theorists and practitioners were in agreement that reform is the piecemeal maintenance of the existing system of schooling. Reform was described as "fine-tuning", working within the present system, rearranging what is already in place. One practitioner described reform as "editing, making the status quo more efficient." Another said reform meant improving "already existing practices and structures." Similarly, one theorist saw reform as "more of the same" and another saw it as "add-ons and mechanistic." Still another described reform as "less comprehensive." Reform attends to parts of the whole, but not to the whole itself. While some "tinkering" is undertaken, the overall structure remains intact.

Restructuring, on the other hand, was seen by this group as focused on changing the entire system. As one practitioner put it, "Restructuring reaches deeper than reform." "It allows you to rethink the whole notion of education and what it means to teach children, " said another practitioner. Still another noted that restructuring "examines beliefs, knowledge, action and wants." One theorist called restructuring "systemic," and another theorist described restructuring as "fundamental and pervasive." To sum up this group of responses, restructuring was seen by a significant group of theorists and practitioners as "a complete change, " that will, if done properly, "completely change the way we run our schools."

Outside Mandates vs. Restructuring from Within

Of practitioners who responded that reform and restructuring were different, 11% (15) indicated that reform was mandated from the outside by legislatures, state education departments, or school boards, whereas restructuring was initiated from within the school by "people directly

involved." None of the theorists mentioned this issue. Perhaps practitioners, because of their intimate involvement with efforts to change schools, were especially aware of the origins of such efforts.

Particularly worth noting are the lines practitioners drew to indicate outsiders. Some even viewed the superintendent as an outsider. Insiders generally meant those within the school building, including "school-based administrators" and "classroom teachers." Another interesting feature of these comments was the lack of reference to parents, business, or other lay persons. They were not viewed as outsiders, but neither were they viewed as insiders. They simply were not mentioned in this context. It appears, then, that practitioners view the business of restructuring as their business with little room for assistance or interference from parents and the public.

According to practitioners, restructuring from within arose from "a stated need or shared vision." While reform can be imposed, restructuring needs consensus. Again, by implication, the process for reaching consensus was viewed as one that required cooperation and involvement of all of the professionals within the school but with little or no input from lay persons. "Restructuring is something school-based administrators and teachers do to solve problems at their school and increase student achievement." In other words, restructuring "is school-specific;" it comes from within the school and from professionals.

Top Down or Bottom Up

Practitioners described reform as being top down, another variation on the theme of mandated change, and restructuring was thought of as a bottom-up process. Again, no theorists' responses fit this category, possibly because the origin of efforts to change schools are not crucial to theorists.

The practitioners, however, gave several responses regarding the origins of change efforts. As one person put it, "Restructuring allows the school unit to arrive at [its] own strategies to meet goals. Many more classroom teachers are involved in developing concepts and means." Another expressed it more succinctly: "Reform is generally top down. Restructuring efforts involve

teachers in the decision-making process." Two final quotations will convey the essence of these ideas:

> School reform has been underway for decades without much success. Working from the top and filtering to the bottom of the proverbial ladder. Restructuring often originates within a school and spreads out.

> When I think of reform, I think of policy and top down. Restructuring brings to mind grass roots efforts and very personalized, individualized, unique efforts. No two restructuring schools would go about things in the same way or end up looking the same.

Semantics

Of those responding to this question, a group of 13 practitioners (9%) and four theorists (22%) found reform and restructuring have substantially overlapping meanings. As one practitioner said, "It is a matter of perception and definition of terms." Others in this group see the difference between the two terms as merely "semantics," as one theorist said, or view restructuring as "one kind of reform," as stated by one practitioner. Another theorist said, "One is a subset of the other," but he didn't say which was which. The general attitude of this group seems to be summed up in the following practitioner's response:

> We spend too much time and energy worrying about titles and terminology. Whether restructuring or reform, the bottom line is to improve our schools. This needs to be a priority of all affected by education.

Opposing Opinions

A small group of eight practitioners (6%) and two theorists (11% of those who responded to this question) held views which were generally the opposite of the vast majority of both groups. One of these practitioners suggested "restructuring is changing the way we do our business; reform is changing the business we are in." A theorist in this group said, "Restructuring can be the reallocation of resources without changing goals and values. Reform implies that the reallocation . . . is done in the light of reordering priorities for learning [and] changing attitudes." Perhaps the best example of this group of responses came from a practitioner:

> Restructuring has to do with "conducting business" differently in some areas while still operating within the basic framework, whereas reform involves more drastic changes. . . Reform is surgery. Restructuring is a "band-aid" approach.

Clearly the majority of respondents, both theorists and practitioners, would substitute "reform" for "restructuring", and vice versa, in these responses.

Summary

As practitioners see it, they have frequently been asked to make someone else's solution work whether they agree with it or not and then have been blamed for the failure if it didn't work. Few would describe this as an ideal working environment for any worker, let alone those who see themselves as professionals. Although a preponderance of both practitioners and theorists viewed restructuring and reform as "quite different," there were some notable variations in the perceptions of practitioners and theorists. For one thing, the theorists were nearly evenly divided between those who saw reform and restructuring as the same. Practitioners viewed them as different by a nearly two to one ratio.

While several practitioners spoke of reform being mandated from without or from the top down and restructuring arising from within a school (bottom up), not one theorists even mentioned this distinction. However, it is not surprising that practitioners who are involved in the day-to-day work of restructuring would be more sensitive than theorists to the sources of restructuring efforts in which they are engaged.

Another notable finding from this item is that 22% of the theorists indicated their inability to answer the question because of their own uncertainty about the differences between restructuring and reform. If those who are doing the research and writing on restructuring have trouble defining the concept, it is hardly surprising that we found such a variety of responses, some directly contradicting others, to our question about the differences between the two concepts. As one theorist said, "The problem with 'restructuring' is that it can mean quite different - often contradictory - things." Another theorist put it this way: "The jury is still out about this comparison."

Needs, Problems, Issues

Participants were asked whether restructuring efforts were begun in response to specific educational issues, needs, or problems. Table 4 indicates their responses by category.

Table 4: Needs, Problems, Issues

	Practitioners (n=238)		Theorists (n=27)	
Is restructuring a response to a specific need, problem, or issue?	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	206	86.55%	7	25.93%
No	22	9.24%	13	48.15%
No Response	10	4.20%	7	25.93%
Total	238	99.99%	27	100.01%

Over 48% of the theorists said restructuring efforts are not aimed at specific needs, problems, or issues. This could indicate that, at least in a plurality of the theorists' perceptions, current restructuring efforts lack definite goals and purposes. However, several other theorists identified such issues as teacher professionalism, drop-out rates, student diversity, teacher empowerment, and the need for developing a vision for the school as problems at which restructuring efforts are aimed.

Two theorists, both leaders of teachers' organizations, listed the professionalization of teaching as an aim of restructuring efforts. "Teaching (is) not yet a genuine profession," said one. It is notable that these two teachers' association leaders were the only two theorists who mentioned this goal for restructuring. Both of these participants also listed poor student achievement as an important issue, implying a possible connection between student achievement and the lack of professionalism among teachers.

The university professors who listed issues on which restructuring efforts are focused showed less agreement than did the teachers' association leaders. One professor listed problems related to budget cuts and low student test scores as the first two focal issues, while another cited the need for a school-wide vision as an important focus.

One researcher listed "dropouts, student diversity, (and) empowering teachers at the site"

as focal points for restructuring efforts. This rather wide variety of focal issues mentioned by theorists demonstrates the nebulous nature of the concept of restructuring. However, this vagueness is not necessarily a drawback, for it allows each school or district to adapt the restructuring process to its particular needs.

Nearly all practitioners said most restructuring efforts are developed in response to specific needs, problems, or issues. The issues were varied, but such problems as low student achievement, meeting the needs of at-risk students and diverse student populations, and what one participant called "a lack of success with old methods" were frequently cited. As one teacher put it, "Restructuring efforts at our school arose out of our need to continue to reflect on our craft; to keep asking questions in order to understand better how it is children learn."

A school administrator cited the changing world as an impetus for the school restructuring movement. "We live in a changing world - most schools have not changed to meet the needs of today's students and families." This same idea was mentioned by a teacher (from a different school) who said, "Schools see themselves as not being able to serve changing populations with (a) traditional organization and seek new ways to accomplish goals."

Though most of the practitioners clearly saw restructuring efforts as attempts to bring about some needed change, one administrator pointed out, "Too many people are making changes without stipulating goals and end results."

Sources of Ideas

This item asked participants to identify all major sources of ideas for their thinking about restructuring public schools. Table 5 details participants' responses.

Table 5: Sources of Ideas

	Practitioners (n=238)			Theorists (n=27)		
Sources of Ideas	Number	Percent	Rank	Number	Percent	Rank
Books, articles	200	84.03%	1	26	96.30%	1
Colleague Teachers	100	42.02%	6	13	48.15%	3
School Administrators	118	49.58%	4	10	37.04%	5
District Administrators	78	32.77%	7	6	22.22%	6
State Department of Education	111	46.64%	5	1	3.70%	8
Consultants	136	57.14%	3	2	7.41%	7
Other Restructuring Schools	140	58.82%	2	23	85.19%	2
Other	49	20.59%	8	11	40.74%	4

Note: Because each respondent could check as many sources as she or he thought appropriate, percentages do not add to 100%.

Ninety-six percent of the theorists and 84 percent of the practitioners indicated that books and articles were the most frequent source of ideas about restructuring. Both groups identified other schools as the second most frequent source of ideas. There was no agreement on the remaining rankings of the two groups. Theorists ranked colleague teachers and other sources in third and fourth place. At the bottom of their rankings were consultants and state education department officials. Practitioners ranked consultants and school administrators in third and fourth place and other sources at the bottom of their list.

The following observations may be made:

1) The two most frequently mentioned sources of ideas are the same for both groups. This finding dispels the widespread belief that teachers don't read; they do use professional journals as sources of ideas.

2) Beyond the first two rankings, there is little agreement between the two groups.

3) It is interesting that theorists, who are largely college professors, identified colleague teachers as the third most important source of ideas. Of course, their colleague teachers are other professors who are generally expected to keep up with new trends in education. Practitioners put colleague teachers in sixth place after

consultants, school administrators, and state education department officials. This may reflect the lack of opportunity for dialogue in schools and the different cultures of the two institutions.

Paradigms for Restructuring

In this item, participants were asked which assumptions appear to provide a foundation for restructuring public schools. They could choose between refining the existing model or developing a new model. "Both" or "neither" were the remaining choices. Table 6 delineates participants' responses.

Table 6: Paradigms for Restructuring

	Practitioners (n=238)		Theorists (n=27)	
Assumptions for Restructuring	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Improve Existing Paradigms	25	10.50%	1	3.70%
Develop New Paradigms	67	28.15%	8	29.63%
Both	139	58.40%	11	40.74%
Neither	4	1.68%	4	14.81%
No Response	3	1.26%	3	11.11%
Total	238	99.99%	27	99.99%

The purpose of this question was to determine what each group saw as the underlying assumptions for restructuring. Was restructuring simply to reinforce and improve the educational status quo or was it to develop new models or paradigms? Practitioners (58%) and theorists (41%) agreed that both of these assumptions provide the foundation for restructuring. Another 28% of practitioners and 30% of theorists agreed that developing new models of public schooling is the intent of restructuring. Only one theorist and 11% of the practitioners identified improving existing models of schooling as the underlying assumption for restructuring. One theorist wrote, "The goal is to develop new models, but at best schools are mostly revising old models." Another asserted that the underlying assumption "is focusing (the) school organization on the requirements of good teaching and learning."

Goals of Restructuring

Participants were asked to identify the goals of restructuring efforts by checking all that were appropriate from a list derived from the literature. Table 7 indicates their responses. Except for student achievement, which was ranked #1 by practitioners and theorists, there is no common agreement about the goals of restructuring. Practitioners rank student achievement and improved educational programs as the two most frequently sought goals of restructuring. Student commitment is also an often mentioned goal (#5) by practitioners. Teacher commitment and community involvement are tied for third and fourth place, and parent commitment is ranked #6.

The two goals mentioned most frequently may be thought of as substantive goals and the remaining four as process or instrumental goals. In other words, it might be reasoned that greater student motivation and commitment, improved teacher and parent motivation and commitment, and greater community involvement would go a long way toward improving educational programs and student achievement.

Table 7: Goals of Restructuring

	Practitioners (n=238)			Theorists (n=27)		
Goals	Responses	Percent	Rank	Responses	Percent	Rank
Student Achievement	218	91.60%	1	23	85.19%	1
Student Involvement	177	74.37%	8	11	40.74%	12
Teacher Autonomy	183	76.89%	7	22	81.48%	2
Smaller Schools	56	23.53%	15	13	48.15%	10.5
Improved Educational Programs	201	84.45%	2	16	59.26%	9
School Authority	158	66.39%	9	19	70.37%	5.5
Improved Working Conditions	115	48.32%	12	20	74.07%	3
Governance Structure	130	54.62%	11	19	70.37%	5.5
Changing Central Office Roles	101	42.44%	13	8	29.63%	14
Student Commitment	195	81.93%	5	19	70.37%	5.5
Teacher Commitment	196	82.35%	3.5	19	70.37%	5.5
Parent Commitment	184	77.31%	6	13	48.15%	10.5
Administrator Commitment	136	57.14%	10	10	37.04%	13
Community Involvement	196	82.35%	3.5	18	66.67%	8
Other	59	24.79%	14	4	14.81%	15

Note: Because each respondent could check as many items as she or he thought appropriate, percentages do not add to 100%.

It is also interesting to note the items that were not mentioned very frequently by

practitioners. Greater teacher power or autonomy, improved working conditions, and greater authority for the school (versus the district) were ranked seventh, twelfth, and ninth respectively of the fifteen goals that were listed. It appears that goals designed to give teachers greater authority, responsibility, and better working conditions are not nearly as important to practitioners as those "bottom-line" goals of improved programs and greater achievement.

Theorists, on the other hand, mentioned these goals with much greater frequency. After student achievement, which was ranked #1, greater teacher autonomy, improved working conditions, and greater school authority were ranked second, third, and fourth respectively. This raises an interesting question: Are the practitioners, 40% of whom are teachers, squeamish about touting their needs and interests, or are theorists that much out of touch with what is actually going on in schools? Perhaps practitioners took the latter set of things for granted. Greater authority to schools and teachers seem to go hand in hand with restructuring.

Two other observations from the theorists have interesting implications. Theorists ranked greater community involvement and improved educational programs as eighth and ninth respectively in the frequency of their responses. Does this mean that they think greater community involvement would not lead to greater student achievement, their number one goal? Perhaps they think that improved educational programs will not necessarily lead to greater student achievement. Maybe they see these things so loosely connected that improving one won't necessarily lead to improvement in the other. Unfortunately, our data will not permit us to discover the answers to these questions.

Focus of Restructuring Efforts

Participants were asked to identify the focus of most restructuring efforts by checking as many items as they deemed appropriate from a list that was provided. As one can see from Table 8, practitioners ranked decision making and curriculum and instruction as the foci for most restructuring efforts. Roles and relationships was the third most often checked item, and the distribution of time, periods, etc. was ranked fourth, tied with working conditions. With the

exception of curriculum and instruction, theorists ranked the same items in the top four positions, though not with identical ranks. Except for the first three items on the practitioners' list and the top two items on the theorists' list, there is not much difference in the frequency with which the other items are mentioned. The remaining items are nearly equally likely to be the focus of restructuring.

The practitioners mentioned resource allocation as a focus of restructuring nearly twice as frequently as the theorists did. Perhaps practitioners are more conscious of the need to control expenditures to bring about restructuring. Theorists may have accepted the idea that radical change does not require additional funding, but teachers, who are already spending out-of-pocket money for instructional materials, appear to believe that resources must be restructured as well as other things.

Table 8: Focus of Restructuring

	Practitioners (n=238)			Theorists (n=27)		
Focus	Responses	Percent	Rank	Responses	Percent	Rank
Curriculum & Instruction	192	80.67%	2	13	48.15%	6
Roles and Relationships	177	74.37%	3	21	77.78%	2
Decision Making	194	81.51%	1	23	85.19%	1
Resource Allocation	121	50.84%	5	8	29.63%	9.5
Grouping, Tracking	115	48.32%	7	11	40.74%	8
Values, Beliefs	118	49.58%	6	12	44.44%	7
Distribution of Power	110	46.22%	8	14	51.85%	5
Use of Time, Periods, etc.	146	61.34%	4	15	55.56%	3.5
Technology	109	45.80%	9	6	22.22%	11
School within a school	79	33.19%	11	8	29.63%	9.5
Working Conditions	97	40.76%	10	15	55.56%	3.5
Other	20	8.40%	12	1	3.70%	12

Note: Because each respondent could check as many items as she or he thought appropriate, percentages do not add to 100%.

Barriers to Restructuring

When asked to identify barriers that have made it difficult for restructuring efforts to succeed, both practitioners and theorists identified the beliefs, thoughts and values of the persons involved as the most frequent barrier. With theorists, it was tied as number one with organizational barriers in the school or district, both chosen by 78%. The next most frequent citations by theorists,

administrative barriers, school board policies, etc., and resource barriers, each was cited by 63%. Practitioners rated the beliefs, thoughts and values of those not involved and resources as the next most frequent barriers to restructuring. After two or three barriers, the rest are mentioned almost equally within each group and even the percentage spread between groups is not that great. It appears then that no one, or even a few barriers, is dominant in making it difficult to restructure. Table 9 provides the full data for this item.

Table 9: Barriers to Restructuring

	Practitioners (n=238)			Theorists (n=27)		
Barriers	Responses	Percentage	Rank	Responses	Percentage	Rank
Values of Those Involved	162	68.07%	1	21	77.78%	1.5
Values of Those Not Involved	136	57.14%	2	15	55.56%	6
Administrative Barriers	104	43.70%	7	17	62.96%	4
Board Policy and Attitude	112	47.06%	5	17	62.96%	4
State Department Policy	116	48.74%	3.5	14	51.85%	7
Organizational Barriers	111	46.64%	6	21	77.78%	1.5
Resource Barriers	133	55.88%	3.5	17	62.96%	4
Others	50	21.01%	8	10	37.04%	8

Note: Because each respondent could check as many items as she or he thought appropriate, percentages do not add to 100%.

Who Participates, Who Benefits

Participation or involvement is an important benchmark of one's commitment to restructure. Respondents were asked to assess the rate of involvement (from very low to very high) of each of 10 different stakeholder groups. To make the data on participation more manageable and useful, we have combined the high and very high response columns and the low and very low columns and then compared the ranks of theorists and practitioners for both high and low involvement as shown in Tables 10 and 11. (Full tables with the complete data are available in Appendix B and C.) A discussion of these comparisons follows.

Stakeholders Having High Involvement

In identifying high involvement stakeholders, as shown in Table 10, theorists and

practitioners rank the same groups - teachers, school administrators, and district administrators - in first, second and third place and in the same order. These three groups are all professionals and they are, in order, closest to where involvement is brought to bear on the restructuring of schools. Among professionals, teachers are closest to the students, school administrators are next, and then district administrators. These rankings reinforce what we have heard about restructuring, that it decentralizes the process of decision making and that it involves schools in shaping their own directions.

The third and fourth ranks are held by the same groups, union officials and business leaders, though not in the same order on the theorists' and practitioners' lists. While neither group is intimately involved in restructuring, both have significant stakes in the processes and outcomes of schooling.

One of the surprising features of the high involvement rankings is the agreement between theorists and practitioners that parents, community, and board members are all well down on their lists. Many observers have commended restructuring for its likely involvement of lay groups in reshaping public schooling. The results of this item strongly suggest that it is just not happening to any great extent.

A smaller percentage of theorists than practitioners view the public - parents, boards of education, and community - as highly involved. One could argue that the practitioners are likely to be better informed since they are on the scene or that theorists are likely to be more objective since they are not as directly involved. We have no data to confirm either hypothesis. The important point here, however, is that both groups rank the public stakeholders at the bottom of their high involvement lists.

The involvement of the media represents the single biggest discrepancy on the high involvement lists. Theorists ranked the media and business leaders in a tie for fifth and sixth place, and practitioners ranked them in tenth place. Either the two groups have quite different views of the media's level of involvement or the nature of the involvement might be the point of contention. Perhaps theorists, for example, view the reporting of restructuring as the primary role

of the media and educators view only the actual work of restructuring as legitimate involvement. If this is the case, both of these views might very well be accurate representations of the involvement of the media.

In conclusion, there is substantial agreement between theorists and practitioners about the groups that have a high level of involvement in restructuring.

Table 10: High Involvement of Groups

	Practitioners (n=238)			Theorists (n=27)		
Group	Number	Percentage	Rank	Number	Percentage	Rank
Parents	55	23.11%	7	2	7.41%	7
Students	58	24.37%	6	1	3.70%	9
Teachers	198	83.19%	1	13	48.15%	1
School Administrators	196	82.36%	2	11	40.74%	2
District Administrators	109	45.80%	3	9	33.33%	3
Board Members	51	21.43%	8	1	3.70%	9
Union Officials	63	26.47%	5	5	18.52%	4
Community Members	50	21.01%	9	1	3.70%	9
Business Leaders	74	31.09%	4	3	11.11%	5.5
Media	42	17.65%	10	3	11.11%	5.5

Note: Because each respondent could check as many items as she or he thought appropriate, percentages do not add to 100%.

Stakeholders Having Low Involvement

An examination of Table 11 reveals that theorists and practitioners are in substantial agreement about the stakeholders who have a low level of involvement in restructuring. Students are ranked #1, the community, #3, and the board, #4 on both lists. The rankings for seventh through tenth place are also identical: union officials, district administrators, school administrators, and teachers. In all, seven of the ten rankings are identical.

The most discrepant rankings are for parents - ranked second by theorists and sixth by practitioners - and the media - ranked second by practitioners and fifth by theorists. The same reasoning might explain the difference in media ranks here as was applied to the analysis of high involvement. The analysis of parent involvement, however, is not as clear-cut. About the only thing that can be said with any certainty is that theorists view parents as having a lower level of

involvement than practitioners do.

It is interesting, but not especially surprising, that students are ranked #1 in low involvement by both groups. Since student passivity in schools is one of the frequently voiced concerns by critics (and even some students), those interested in greater student involvement can take little comfort from these data. Of course, the critics are concerned about student involvement in their own learning, and restructuring, even without student involvement, could bring this about. But it seems even more likely to happen if students are involved in restructuring. The nature and extent of that involvement would likely vary considerably from level to level of schooling.

Since the data from the low involvement table offer mirror images of the high involvement table, each seems to reinforce the findings of the other. District administrators, school administrators and teachers ranked 3, 2, and 1 respectively on both high involvement lists. These and other rankings suggest a high degree of reliability in these data.

Table 11: Low Involvement of Groups

	Practitioners (n=238)			Theorists (n=27)		
Group	Number	Percentage	Rank	Number	Percentage	Rank
Parents	102	42.86%	6	17	62.96%	2
Students	126	52.94%	1	21	77.78%	1
Teachers	5	2.10%	10	4	14.81%	10
School Administrators	9	3.78%	9	5	18.52%	9
District Administrators	55	23.11%	8	8	29.63%	8
Board Members	105	44.12%	4	16	59.26%	4
Union Officials	101	42.44%	7	10	37.04%	7
Community Members	107	44.96%	3	17	62.96%	3
Business Leaders	103	43.28%	5	11	40.74%	6
Media	120	50.42%	2	13	48.15%	5

Note: Because each respondent could check as many items as she or he thought appropriate, percentages do not add to 100%.

Who Benefits

Respondents were asked to indicate who would benefit most and least from restructuring by checking an appropriate space for each of eight stakeholder groups. Table 12 presents these data. By far the group most likely to benefit from restructuring is teachers, chosen by 85% of

theorists and 95% of practitioners, although practitioners rated students slightly higher (96%). No theorists and only 2% of the practitioners said that teachers would benefit least from restructuring. These results seem reasonable in light of the responses to previous questions about the focus and goals of restructuring efforts, in which such issues as decision making and teacher autonomy, both likely to benefit teachers, were frequently identified. Students were identified by 59% of the theorists as likely to benefit most from restructuring. It is interesting that the percentage of theorists who believe students will benefit most is significantly smaller than those who believe teachers will benefit most from efforts to restructure public schools. This result is notable because students are, after all, the center of the educational process and its reason for existence.

Table 12: Who Benefits

	Practitioners (n=238)			Theorists (n=27)		
Benefit Most	Number	Percent	Rank	Number	Percent	Rank
Students	228	95.80%	1	16	59.26%	2
Parents & Community	200	84.03%	3	12	44.44%	3
Teachers	226	94.96%	2	23	85.19%	1
School Administrators	179	75.21%	4	9	33.33%	4
District Administrators	73	30.67%	5	1	3.70%	7.5
Board Members	44	18.49%	7	2	7.41%	6
Unions	51	21.43%	6	5	18.52%	5
Other	9	3.78%	8	1	3.70%	7.5
Benefit Least						
Students	3	1.26%	8	4	14.81%	5
Parents & Community	18	7.56%	5	3	11.11%	6
Teachers	5	2.10%	7	0	0.00%	7.5
School Administrators	39	16.39%	4	6	22.22%	4
District Administrators	143	60.08%	3	15	55.56%	1
Board Members	182	76.47%	1	14	51.85%	2
Unions	167	70.17%	2	12	44.44%	3
Other	13	5.46%	6	0	0.00%	7.5

Note: Because each respondent could check as many items as she or he thought appropriate, percentages do not add to 100%.

District administrators and board members were the two groups identified by both groups of participants as likely to benefit least from restructuring. Over 55% of the theorists and 60% of practitioners said district administrators would benefit least, while over 51% of theorists and 76% of practitioners said board members would benefit least. Unions or professional organizations

were expected to benefit least from restructuring by 44% of the theorists and 70% of practitioners. One theorist pointed out that the threat of restructuring efforts is greatest for school and district level administrators in the beginning, but "if successful, all will benefit." Another theorist summed up this section as follows: "If restructuring works, everyone involved should benefit equally."

Success of Restructuring Efforts

Participants were asked to characterize the success of restructuring efforts at the time they were responding to the survey. Table 13 reports their responses. The majority of the theorists (70%) and practitioners (55%) said that success is promising but not yet realized. Three of the twenty-seven theorists (11%) said that the success of restructuring efforts is clear but limited, while 23% of practitioners checked this response.

Table 13: Success of Restructuring Efforts

	Practitioners (n=238)		Theorists (n=27)	
Success	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Promising but not realized	130	54.62%	19	70.37%
Clear but limited	54	22.69%	3	11.11%
Definite and extensive	25	10.50%	0	0.00%
Transformed the schools	8	3.36%	1	3.70%
Other	11	4.62%	4	14.81%
No Response	10	4.20%	0	0.00%
Total	238	99.99%	27	99.99%

Two theorists brought up an important issue when they responded to this item by asking, "What is 'success'?" Because the concept of restructuring is so nebulous, the meaning of success will indeed vary with each restructuring effort. However, it is important that those participating in each restructuring effort agree on some method or tool to evaluate its success.

Reservations About Restructuring

A total of 297 comments (263 from practitioners and 34 from theorists) were offered in response to this question. It is clear that both groups have a substantial number of reservations

about restructuring. The vast majority of the responses are common to both groups, and a small percentage is unique to each. Table 14 lists the topics of these reservations and the percent of practitioners' and theorists' responses that fell under each topic.

Table 14: Reservations About Restructuring

	Practitioners' Responses (n=263)			Theorists' Responses (n=34)		
Topic of Reservation	Number	Percent	Rank	Number	Percent	Rank
Resources	46	17.49%	3	5	14.71%	4
Political/Organizational Obstacles	66	25.09%	2	9	26.47%	1
Teachers, Teaching and Learning	40	15.21%	4	5	14.71%	5
Success or Predictions of Failure	69	26.24%	1	8	23.53%	2
Change or Restructuring Process	38	14.45%	5	6	17.65%	3
Other	4	1.52%	6	1	2.94%	6
Total	263	100.00%		34	100.01%	

Note: Percentages are based on the number of responses. Some participants gave more than one response.

Reservations about Resources

Both groups expressed reservations about whether sufficient time and monetary resources would be available to bring about needed change. The potential lack of resources was the third most frequently mentioned reservation by practitioners, but of six topics, it was ranked in the fourth or fifth place by theorists. Although time and money were the dominant concerns, training, energy, and commitment were also mentioned.

Time is one of those finite quantities we are all aware of, and it is never far from the consciousness of teachers and administrators. Teachers, especially, function under enormous constraints of time with little opportunity to plan, develop, refine, study, or engage in many of the myriad activities associated with restructuring. As one teacher confessed in response to this question, "I'm not sure we have the time, resources, or energy to do what we know in our hearts must be done."

Theorists expressed similar concerns about time, but only one mentioned time from a teacher's perspective: Will I have enough time to do what needs to be done? Five theorists focused instead on the length of time needed for restructuring efforts to demonstrate results. As

one put it, "There won't be enough time for the process of change to evolve." Two of these theorists described their reservations about time in terms of the "quick fix" mentality of the American public and one stated a reservation in terms of a question: "Will we have the patience necessary to persevere?"

The views about money, which are very similar in both groups, can be summed up in a question: Will there be enough resources (usually expressed as money) to do the job? A practitioner asserted, "My system will implement appropriate restructuring methods but not fund the methods at the level needed to be successful." Theorists generally expressed similar views in briefer language: "financial limitations."

Reservations about Political/Organizational Obstacles

In examining the comments of practitioners and theorists, we found that practitioners were much more likely to specify a level - local, state, or national - in their observations about political or organizational obstacles. Theorists were likely to offer comments that cut across these settings or that could be applied to more than one, if not all three. Moreover, the theorists were more likely to blame practitioners for not understanding political and organizational forces whereas practitioners were more likely to view others, not themselves, as standing in the way of change.

Reservations about Local Communities

By far the vast majority of the responses in this category expressed reservations about the opposition of individuals or groups within local communities. Among those named were the superintendent and other district officials, the school board, parents and the public, principals and other school administrators, teachers' unions, and schools in the district that were not restructuring. Parents and the public, district officials, and the school board were the groups most frequently mentioned. Since virtually all of the respondents were either teachers or school administrators, it is not surprising that they pointed their collective finger at people outside the school. There is a tendency for this group of school professionals to take on the role of true

believers who are not supported by district administrators or by parents and the public.

Other themes that ran through the reservations about individuals or groups at the local level included resentment, misunderstanding, the failure to accept or support restructuring, interference, and limited involvement. Some of these reservations described sins of omission, of course, and others, sins of commission. It is one thing to show limited involvement and quite another to oppose or interfere with what others (at the school level) have done.

It is also important to note how frequently "the beef" is with the school board or administrators at both the district and building levels. Of 25 comments, nine were directed at the school board, district office, or school administrators. Some of these comments came from teachers, but others came from building administrators.

Only two theorists of eight who offered comments directly identified anyone at the local level as an obstacle to restructuring. One said that restructuring might ". . . reinforce teachers' vested interests." An additional theorist identified ". . . educators' lack of knowledge about political and organizational forces" as a reservation, but this term could apply to persons in higher education as well as teachers, administrators, and others in public schools.

Other theorists indicted local teachers and administrators by implication. "Those committed to restructuring," said one, "are not knowledgeable enough about the political issues they are confronting." Others mentioned "powerbases" and "little sense of school as an organization." One theorist stated, "Too few understand it (restructuring) in the context of society, organizations, and governance," but this point certainly applies to a broader circle of persons than those at the local level. Finally, one theorist asserted, "The structural and governance changes needed to make it work, won't be permitted to happen."

State and Federal Obstacles

A group of practitioners focused its reservations on state and federal obstacles to restructuring. One individual captured this well when he said:

"DOE keeps changing the rules and expectations before the process even gets good

> and started. Our state legislature is demanding changes in the schools but they (legislators) don't know squat about the real world of teaching!"

One person mentioned higher education and unions among the organizations that resist changing, and another reservation was expressed as the "reluctance of state officials and district level officials to allow change to happen. They have the tendency to continue to regulate!" Another practitioner with similar reservations expressed them this way:

> "I fear that someone (legislators, president, different superintendent), somewhere will decide that teacher/parent empowerment should not be allowed. The feeling that you can make a difference will then be obliterated."

None of the theorists mentioned either state or federal obstacles in their reservations, perhaps because they are less directly associated with or affected by decisions made at these levels, especially with respect to restructuring. However, as we mentioned earlier, theorists were more likely to mention political and organizational barriers without reference to a specific level.

Two theorists' reservations involved doubt about the likelihood that needed changes in governance would be made. "Teachers, parents, and others in the school are to implement what policy makers prescribe," said one.

One final theorist in this category expressed a concern about the political forces behind restructuring efforts: "The current movement seems heavily motivated by forces of privatization: school choice, vouchers, private and parochial schools, [and] business enterprises seeking the educational dollar."

Reservations about Teachers, Teaching and Learning

A group of practitioners, many of whom are teachers, expressed concerns about teachers who are engaged in the restructuring process. Burnout was the most obvious concern for some practitioners. One person expressed the reservation that "schools are so full of cynicism at all levels that we may lack the courage and will to make necessary changes." Another observed "that (restructuring) might not be sustainable; (it) takes too much out of the hides of teachers." Still another expressed the reservation that teachers must be released on a regular and on-going basis

for planning in teams, "as the efforts of restructuring can be exhausting."

Other practitioners focused their comments on teachers who were resisting restructuring - teachers who do "not understand it or see the need for it." As one observed, " the doomsayers will win out with, 'See, I told you it wouldn't work,' before it has a chance to (work)." One practitioner was concerned that "the fire doesn't move to the trenches. A core group forms proposals and the already over-constrained teacher hasn't the time or energy to appreciate the good news about restructuring - old dogs, new tricks." Some expressed this in terms of the need for retraining. As one observed, "teachers who don't or won't change will have to be retrained or they will endanger the process." The same person went on to say that "some teachers may fear a similar situation with administrators."

One person was concerned that teachers "shoulder the responsibility that comes along with greater empowerment," or as another put it, "we are really, in my opinion, 'at the edge' in trying to create our own program that works. I'm not sure anyone has a final model in mind. I have no problems with that, but many do, and it's hard to keep up morale."

Several theorists expressed reservations about teachers either directly or by implication. Two mentioned the need to change educators' "entrenched practices and thinking." Another put it this way: "Our memories of what 'used to be' get in the way of understanding what present circumstances require."

One theorist provided a more detailed description:

> "Efforts won't fundamentally change the workplace of teachers nor change their assumptions about learning. Without changing teachers' beliefs and practices, I fear that student learning will never improve."

Another theorist expressed the concern "that many efforts do not appear to be addressing student issues/needs/outcomes." Since teachers are likely to be seen as having this responsibility, they cannot escape the criticism implied by this observation. Comments that focus on "minimal attention to classroom issues" (underlined in the original), "neglect of instruction", and "how well restructuring relates to instruction in the classroom" are additional examples of reservations with implied criticisms of teachers.

Perhaps the best way to conclude this discussion of theorists' views is by offering one final quotation:

> "My greatest concern is that it (restructuring) is activity for the sake of appearance of doing 'something' without significant changes that translate into more effective teaching practices and student outcomes variously defined."

These criticisms, of course, apply to administrators, school boards, and others who are involved in restructuring projects at the local level, but teachers must accept their share of the blame to the extent that this criticism is accurate.

There is some evidence from responses to other questions in the questionnaire that practitioners are focused on improving instruction to address student needs. Of 15 goals listed for restructuring, for example, practitioners ranked "greater student achievement" as #1 and "improved educational programs" as #2. Of 12 items listed as potential foci for restructuring efforts, practitioners ranked "curriculum and instruction" as #1 (tied with "decision making"). These data suggest that the theorists' implied criticisms may not be entirely warranted. Both of these views, of course, are based upon perceptions, not observations, of what is actually happening in schools.

Reservations about Success or Predictions of Failure

Both theorists and practitioners held reservations about success or the likelihood of failure in restructuring efforts. Included in this category, as well, were observations about the unrealistic expectations that some persons have for restructuring. While these two groups were in general agreement about this issue, there were some differences as well.

To some teachers and administrators, the primary reservation was how to measure success. The fear was expressed that too much emphasis would be given to standardized tests and that other more appropriate measures would be overlooked. A few were concerned that some changes aren't measurable with existing instruments.

> "My greatest reservations with respect to restructuring are: the effects of many of the changes are not measurable and may indicate lack of improvement; too much emphasis may be placed on standardized test scores as a means of measuring success...."

Other teachers and administrators felt that organizational changes and other inappropriate goals would be substituted for academic achievement, leading them to question the grounds on which success is to be judged. The two quotations that follow express this concern.

> "(My) greatest reservation is that people will be satisfied with initial success and not continue to pursue higher level goals."

> "Emphasis being placed on organizational structure rather than academics."

Some practitioners focused their reservations on failure rather than success. One concern of this group was that "a restructuring effort can fail to produce any improvement" or as another put it, "that the promise of restructuring will not be realized." Still another person suggested that "years may be needed to show results."

Two practitioners expressed the fear that colleges would not "recognize the value of new forms of learning" or as another asserted, "students will lose the edge they need to get into college." Apparently, they are unaware of the success that nontraditional private schools have had with the placement of graduates in a variety of high-quality colleges.

Practitioners were keenly aware of the unrealistic expectations which they, their colleagues, or parents and public held for restructuring. Paradoxically, it appears that the longer reform, and now restructuring, take to make a difference, the shorter the time expected to show results. Here is how one person put it.

> "People will want instant results and get impatient with the amount of time it takes to make meaningful changes; also people are conditioned to looking for 'standard/simple' solutions. Teaching, learning, and change are too complex to assume that there are quick solutions."

Another worried about how those not involved would react to change. As this person said,

> "Restructuring is very hard to understand and accept for people who are not involved. These same people also want to see instant results. I feel the hardest part about restructuring is changing people's mind set."

One person expressed dismay at the assumption that so much was expected so quickly. "Such changes cannot be made in a year, using short-term goals. Long-term goals, with patient persistence, can result in satisfying and productive accomplishments." Another practitioner,

perhaps cognizant of the history of change in education, suggested a band-wagon effect. "Communities won't give restructuring enough time to work before jumping on something else; programs will be adopted because it's (sic) in vogue rather than meeting the needs of the children involved."

Theorists also worried about the success of restructuring. "It will take too long, one said, "to affect the current generation in school - efforts will not be coordinated and coherent over time." Another stated the fear that "there won't be enough time for the process of change to evolve.

Three themes were mentioned by practitioners that were not addressed by theorists: concerns about the measurement of results, fears that colleges and universities would not recognize the value of the new learnings, and unrealistic expectations on the part of colleagues, parents, and the public. These reservations appear to be the natural result of practitioners "being on the firing line." Theorists can afford to take a more abstract and distant view of things; they are, after all, removed from the scene of the action. Practitioners, on the other hand, are at the pressure point. It is they who are expected to transform their schools.

Reservations about the Change or Restructuring Process

Both practitioners and theorists held reservations about the change (restructuring) process. The largest number of practitioners were concerned that restructuring might be misunderstood. One practitioner, for example, worried that "restructuring might become a thing or event, not a process that requires constant monitoring, motivation, support, and risk-taking." Another emphasized the need to maintain the process -- to keep "growing and changing as is appropriate."

The major concern of theorists, on the other hand, was the likelihood that restructuring would be focused on pseudo-change rather than real change - that restructuring would be "largely a rhetorical game" with more talk than real action. Another theorist feared that restructuring would "remain symbolic only." Still another said, "My greatest concern is that it is activity for the sake of (the) appearance of doing 'something'."

Four practitioners had similar concerns. As one put it, "The whole process may be just

another fad or trend. So many other 'innovations' have come through - what makes restructuring any different?" One administrator asserted that real change must begin "at the building level" or by definition, it is "not restructuring. . .but reform." Finally, a teacher expressed concern that there would be "much effort to create a very similar structure which uses different words to describe the original (structure)."

How people respond to change was another theme of practitioners. One administrator expressed concern at the "lack of resolve to change the structure of a community/national institution." Another administrator emphasized the role of education in the change process. "Educators have not dealt with change effectively in the past," he said, "and to be successful, we must be able to help everyone embrace a radically different school model."

Two theorists stated their concerns about the lack of understanding of the change process by those involved. One said, "Over-simplification narrows views." Another cited the "abstractness of books and articles on the subject " as a failure to fully understand the process.

Finally, two theorists noted the complexity of the process. One stated the concern " that recommendations will be made about the viability of various efforts based on broad surveys. "It's such complicated work - hard to pin down to 24 questions," a reference to our questionnaire. Another expressed a similar reservation about our question on reservations: "Restructuring means too many things for this question to have meaning."

While they used slightly different terms, practitioners were also concerned about the complexity of the process. Here is the way one teacher put it: "My greatest reservation comes from the inability to get systemic change to take place. This seems to be another bandaid approach to fixing the problem." An administrator in a different district offered a caveat:

> ". . . unless a respect for how kids learn and pursuant philosophy emerges, the restructuring will be a bandaid or perhaps a disaster. It will then be used as an example of why not to restructure someplace else based on a bad experience."

New Understandings of Public Schooling

Participants were asked how their understanding of public schooling had changed as a

result of their thinking about and observing restructuring efforts. Comments were classified into ten categories. An analysis of each of the ten categories will tell us something about what practitioners and theorists are learning about public schools from thinking about and observing restructuring efforts. Table 15 presents these results.

Table 15: New Understandings of Public Schooling

	Practitioners (n=168)			Theorists (n=19)		
New Understandings	Number	Percent	Rank	Number	Percent	Rank
Little or No Change	16	9.52%	7	5	26.32%	2
Old and New Paradigms	17	10.12%	5.5	2	10.53%	3
Decision Making	11	6.55%	9	1	5.26%	5.5
Site-based Management	21	12.50%	2.5	0	0.00%	9
Collaborative Partnerships	17	10.12%	5.5	0	0.00%	9
Change Process	25	14.88%	1	8	42.11%	1
Needs of Children	21	12.50%	2.5	1	5.26%	5.5
Hope and Despair	13	7.74%	8	1	5.26%	5.5
Public and Society	8	4.76%	10	1	5.26%	5.5
Schools and Schooling	19	11.31%	4	0	0.00%	9
Total	168	100.00%		19	100.00%	

Note: Percentages are based on the number of responses. Some participants gave more than one response.

Little or No Change

Sixteen practitioners (approximately 10% of the practitioners responding to this question) and five theorists (26%) indicated that their understanding of public schools had changed little or not at all as a result of restructuring. Seven of the practitioners and three of the theorists said little more than that, but the remaining respondents added further comments. Though each of the practitioners' comments was unique, here are three examples:

> "It has changed my understanding very little. Schools don't meet the needs of kids."
>
> "None, I have always considered education to mean change and unless change is occurring, there is no education."
>
> "I have long believed that we must be teaching children how to learn rather than dictating what they should learn. Our current efforts at restructuring has (sic) reaffirmed my belief."

Two theorists added these comments:

"It hasn't. My understanding is not affected by the large rhetorical movement, but by actual experience and research in a few situations where a specific form of restructuring is taking place."

"Convinced me even more that it is necessary."

Old and New Paradigms of Education

Seventeen practitioners (10%) made some mention of new paradigms of education, often contrasting them with the old paradigms or status quo. As one teacher put it, "My thinking has changed dramatically. I can no longer be content to view the organization through the 'old paradigms.' I am impatient with educators who ignore the needs of today's society and the future." As another teacher stated, "Our present systems are no longer relevant. New paradigms insist that we change or be left behind." An administrator observed:

"It (restructuring) has clarified and reinforced my understanding of what schools should be about. It has also made me painfully aware of how deeply we are mired, entrenched in the present 100 year old paradigm, and how hard it is to envision anything else."

Two of the theorists' comments, placed into this category, were focused on the power of the status quo:

"The status quo is even more powerful than I ever suspected. The sense that teachers are doing enough - that the problems lie elsewhere - is scary."

"Restructuring must happen. It's not an option. Education is a monolith. Hanging onto non-working beliefs is what we do best."

Interestingly, the comments of the theorists are not that different from those of the practitioners. Both groups are critical of the old paradigms. Both express dismay at how deeply entrenched the present system of education is and both feel that restructuring to reflect a new paradigm is absolutely essential. The voices of both groups convey a sense of urgency about the need for change.

Decision Making

Eleven practitioners (7%) learned something about decision making as a result of their experience with restructuring. Only one theorist (5%) mentioned this theme, perhaps because

decision making is an aspect of schooling that theorists aren't as likely to be involved in on a day to day basis.

Among the themes that emerged from practitioners' comments are the importance of involving teachers and students, the value of sharing decision making, and the importance of moving decisions to the level of those affected by them. These ideas embody principles that enlightened business corporations have been implementing for some time. It is interesting to see such ideas emerging in education as a result of restructuring. These are not really new ideas, but they have gained more attention in the crucible of restructuring.

Teachers and principals believe that teachers' involvement is one of the keys to improved decision making. As one person observed, "It convinces one that teachers need to be involved in the dialogue about restructuring as well as the decision making and implementation." A teacher stated, "We have teachers making decisions and creating solutions when it would be easier to do what the principal says."

Teacher involvement speaks to the principle of shared decision making, but it specifically identifies the role of the teacher. Practitioners emphasized the importance of sharing decision making without specifying the individuals to be involved. Statements like the two below were typical of these comments.

> A teacher: "The power to change the direction of the school is greatly enhanced by the sharing of decision making and problem solving."
>
> A principal: "The more the decision is shared, the more likely that the decision will be a good one and will lead to effective change."

Some mentioned the importance of moving decisions to the level of those affected by them. For many school decisions, this brings us back to students and teachers. One principal put it this way: "The more you invoke people in decisions that involve them, the greater commitment you have." A teacher said, " It has confirmed my beliefs that those closest to the situation should have ownership in decision-making." These three themes -- teacher involvement, shared decision making, and moving decisions to the level at which people are most affected -- are not discrete, of

course, but represent a whole cloth whose patterns and shadings reflect these principles.

Site-Based Management

Twelve principals and nine teachers (21, or 13%) said they had learned something about site-based management from their restructuring efforts. This category includes no theorists' comments. Site-based management is best understood as a context for shared decision making. While it is logically possible to imagine site-based management with a principal serving as a benevolent dictator, a more common understanding is that principals and teachers, aided by the support staff and parents, assume responsibility for what goes on in their school. It is understood, of course, that each school will harmonize its vision or agenda with the philosophy of the district.

"Truly effective change must come from people directly involved in the schools - they see the needs, they determine the relative merits or failures of all the strategies they implement," was the way one teacher put it. A principal reached the conclusion "that change can initiate from the trenches and that our greatest resources are found at the building level. We can no longer look to the 'high ups' for the ultimate solutions. It is the responsibility of teachers, students, and parents to improve public schools."

In summary, both teachers and principals have learned the value of giving schools greater power over the educational program they are expected to implement. Such power develops leadership, strengthens commitment, improves productivity, and places responsibility squarely where it belongs, in the hands of teachers, principals, and parents within that school community.

Finally, it is interesting to note that among those principals who have tried restructuring, there is no disagreement with teachers about its value. While principals may have had some anxiety beforehand, they invariably take the same positions as teachers once site-based management has been implemented. This evidence should reassure principals who have not yet entered into restructuring.

Collaborative Partnerships

Seventeen practitioners (10%) and no theorists made comments that were put into this category, the essence of which was captured by one principal who said,

> "My values and beliefs have changed . I no longer believe that schools can operate as islands that stand alone doing the important work they do in isolation. We truly need the community-at-large to succeed: both business and community must join us as partners."

Both teachers and administrators expressed similar thoughts about collaborative partnerships. They described them in positive terms, welcomed them, even saw them as essential. As one teacher said, "It has renewed my belief that we are surrounded by incredible talent in education -- that we must tap all resources -- that education/public schooling must be viewed as a joint effort by all members of the community."

While some respondents viewed the partnership as one between teachers and administration, others included students, parents, businesses, and the larger community as well. As a principal said, "It is important that a structure and process be defined by all stakeholders . . . that it be all inclusive, that communication be two way." Although virtually all saw these partnerships in positive terms, one person spoke about parents and unions undermining the efforts. On the positive side, such partnerships were described as resulting in "constituency involvement," "increased communication," greater unity, and fewer misconceptions about the process.

Learnings About the Change Process

Eight of the comments from theorists (42%) and 25 comments from practitioners (15%) indicated that they had come to a better understanding of change in education as a result of participating in restructuring efforts. What they learned about change may be viewed from one of five perspectives (our labels, not theirs). One group (the optimists) learned that change is needed and can be accomplished. Another group (the essentialists) learned how pressing and essential change is. It must be achieved for public schooling to survive and succeed. A third group (the

realists) learned how very slow and difficult it is to bring about significant change. A fourth group (the cautionaries) learned that change is not necessarily good - that it can be needed or it may be unnecessary, even harmful. Finally, a fifth group (the pessimists) learned that restructuring, like other educational change efforts before it, was unlikely to yield any significant change. Within each group the learnings were quite similar. Across groups, the learnings were quite different and often conflicting.

1) Optimists As the reader might guess, the optimists learned that change or restructuring is needed and can be made. The four practitioners in this group saw ". . . the real possibilities of change." There was potential in the immediate situation. "Changes can be made; best results seem to occur when teachers and staff are empowered to implement change."

The two theorists were also optimistic -- one about a specific effort at restructuring and another with a more general statement of hope. Below are their comments:

> "It has been very gratifying to observe small, isolated school staffs change (change their attitudes and beliefs) and become more professional (their words), more efficacious (mine)."
>
> "Things don't have to be the way they are simply because they have been so for a long time."

2) Essentialists The essentialists are a step beyond the optimists. They sense that change is urgent, that it must occur if public schooling is to survive and prosper. As one practitioner put it, "Public schools must change in order to survive." Another practitioner voiced it this way: "Schools cannot be static. We must open our minds to divergent processes and ideas. We must have greater flexibility and willingness to change." In both these statements the word "must" is a signal that the statement belongs to an essentialist. All of the practitioners in this camp were principals. They see an urgency to restructuring that none of the teachers reported.

One theorist echoed the principals' comments: "Restructuring must happen -- it's not an option." This person added a note of realism (or perhaps pessimism): "Education is a monolith. Hanging onto non-working beliefs is what we do best." Another theorist said that observing and thinking about restructuring "convinced me even more that it is necessary."

3) Realists The group known as the realists, which contains the greatest number of practitioners (12) and theorists (3), understands how slow and difficult, perhaps even painstaking, change in education can be. One practitioner captured the mood of this group well:

> "As a veteran teacher (25 years) I am beginning to believe that the inertia of the system causes all change to be slow -- like watching the wave at a sporting event -- so slow that by the time the last schools are trying 'something new,' the first ones are on to some new arrangement."

For this person, "The Wave" was a wonderful metaphor for change. None of these practitioners spoke of discouragement but only of the reality that change is slow and difficult.

The theorists in this group emphasized not only the slowness, but the complexity of change. As one acknowledged, "I understand the complexity of change more thoroughly, and I know that it will take much longer than previously anticipated." Another echoed a similar concern and reached a surprising conclusion: "The status quo is even more powerful than I suspected. The sense that teachers are doing enough -- that the problems lie elsewhere -- is scary." And as still another put it, "I've grown clearer about the complexities of the culture of the school."

4) Cautionaries This group, which includes three practitioners and no theorists, might best be described as the cautionaries. These individuals expressed a wariness or uncertainty about change and reminded us that it is a two-edged sword. The cautionaries' learning may best be expressed by this comment: "Change is not necessarily good, change needs to be monitored closely." Another person said, "Some change is needed. Some change is necessary. Some change is harmful." It is obvious from these statements that the cautionaries would want us to be careful and enter into change efforts that we had reason to believe were going to bring about positive results. One cautionary had an optimistic streak, encouraging us "not to change for change (sic) sake. But to explore new avenues for educating students."

5) Pessimists This group contains one teacher and three theorists. As one theorist said,

> "I used to be more optimistic that changing the workplace and outside structure would influence teachers' practices. I am disillusioned."

Another theorist marvelled "How impervious they [presumably schools or teachers] are to real - as

opposed to cosmetic - change." One final comment sums up the attitudes expressed by theorists in this category:

> "It has reaffirmed my sense that teachers' classroom practice and ideas about learning are relatively unaffected by restructuring, and thus no significant changes will occur as a result of 'restructuring' as it is currently being done."

Only one practitioner, a teacher, is included in this group. As a group the practitioners are much less pessimistic than the theorists. Except for the cautionaries, the worst characterization we can make of them is that they are realistic about the slow and difficult course of change. Of course, this group of practitoners is not typical of teachers and administrators everywhere. They were chosen because they had entered into restructuring projects and by definition, lacked the pessimism or even cynicism that would have made it difficult, if not impossible, for them to initiate or participate in such projects. Still, it is nice to be reassured about this.

Needs of Children

Approximately 13% or twenty-one practitioners (11 teachers and 10 principals) responded in a way that suggested they had learned something about their school's or district's commitment to children or lack of it during the process of restructuring. That only one theorist commented on this might be explained by the fact that few theorists work directly with children, while practicing teachers and principals work in the midst of children every day and are more likely to be conscious of children's needs.

The practitioners' comments in this category fall into two groups: 1) addressing the needs of students, and 2) making schools work for students. The comments in each category suggest a serious commitment to students.

1) Addressing the Needs of Students It is refreshing to note that for some teachers, restructuring made them even more conscious of the varying needs of children. As one practitioner said, "We need to understand and appreciate diversity and make a commitment to all children." Another put it this way:

> "I've been in this business for 23 years. I'm excited! We're restructuring the system to meet the needs of the students and making education meaningful."

Still another practitioner asserted, "We need to have a child-centered curriculum, instead of a 'school-centered' or other kinds of curriculum structures." In all of the statements in this category, the uniqueness of individual students or the needs of all students was the primary focus of the comments.

2) Making Schools Work for Students A second, closely related category emphasized the need to make schools more responsive to their students. Some of these comments spoke only to the need without offering very specific suggestions for how this might be done. "It made me even more aware," as one respondent said, "of the need to change schools to make them work for all students." Some individuals emphasized the importance of teachers in meeting students' needs. One person put it in this way:

> "The problems we are now facing -- crack babies, child pregnancies, drugs, etc. can only be dealt with on a school-by-school basis. Teachers must feel they have the power to make their work rewarding to themselves and their students. Public education is teachers meeting the needs of their students in their own individual school settings."

The high profile role of teachers came through clearly in this statement. Another comment with a critical bite targets both principals and teachers:

> "Kids are being severely short-changed. Principals and teachers, especially in secondary schools, have created boring, mundane, assembly lines that ignore the needs of kids and society."

In some cases, the respondents mention "the school" as the agent of change. As one said, "Public schools are viable only if we begin to look carefully at the individual populations of each school. Our homogenized view of needs, wants, and best practices no longer works."

Hope and Despair

We have already noted instances of optimism and pessimism in the context of learning about educational change. In this category, we have grouped the more generalized expressions of hope and despair. Thirteen practitioners (8%) and one theorist (5%) learned that there is reason for hope or despair about the future of public schooling as a result of their involvement in

restructuring. For the most part, the comments made by these individuals lacked specificity in goals or procedures, but they either believed good things were happening and would continue to happen or they despaired of any good coming from restructuring. First, let's hear from those who have a message of hope:

> "I have more 'faith' in the people on the firing line and know they can and will 'get the job done' with support and encouragement."
>
> "I realize the deep commitment on the part of our school district (and I think, hope) our state to quality education under difficult circumstances."
>
> "I have always been positive about public schooling. Some of the recent efforts have served to highlight the positive position of education."

In two instances hope was mixed with doubt.

> "There is potential for great benefit but also the potential for damage."
>
> "I hope this restructuring isn't just another phase in the 'fix it' in education. If left in place long enough, it actually might work. I see hope by allowing teachers to actually make changes in a failing system."

Three of the statements were more despairing. One person stated it this way:

> "America is fast losing its pre-eminence as an economic power and world leader. We cannot survive on our present course with our poor work ethic and 'me-first' attitudes. Educators are unlikely to be leaders -- perhaps a failing economy will lead business to develop decent schooling."

By and large, these statements did not offer specific remedies or directions, but they expressed a mood about the state of affairs in public schooling. Those expressing hope saw the half-empty class as a thirst quencher whereas those who despaired knew the water would run out in a swallow or two. Hope was by far the stronger of the two, both in numbers of respondents and in the intensity with which it was expressed. There is an upbeat mood among many of the participants of restructuring that one does not always encounter in change efforts.

Public and Society

Eight practitioners (5%) and one theorist (5%) mentioned society - its needs, its resistance to change, its misunderstanding of what school is all about, or its expectations for public schools -

as something they had learned about. One of these statements, because of its despairing tone, was used in the section on hope and despair. The statements below convey this message quite well:

> "I am more sensitive to the need to bring the larger community along with the need for change. This seems particularly difficult in New York State, where parents were raised in the Regents Diploma era and want to hang onto that as valid education."

> "In order for America to flourish as a democracy, public education must remain and grow strong - keeping up with society's changes -- those not involved in education should lead the movement to restructure the schools."

Schools and Schooling

Nineteen practitioners said they had increased their understandings of schools and schooling, including the outcomes of schooling. Once again, no theorists' comments were placed in this category.

Some practitioners spoke to the failure of traditional schools. As one said, ". . . public schools are emphasizing the wrong skills. Following directions, conforming, and working in isolation are no longer important for our work force. Clear thinking, innovative ideas, and social skills are now more important." Others spoke of schools ". . . not getting the job done," or questioned the necessity of some educational "sacred cows" such as "grouping, the 7 period day, and the Carnegie unit." One person spoke about problems and possibilities in the following way:

> "I am much more aware of the enormity of the problems (social, personal, and academic) which have necessitated such efforts and I am much more encouraged about the material for successfully equipping urban students to compete on all levels with their more economically and educationally advantaged counterparts in suburban or private schools."
> The remaining comments focused on the complexities of schooling, the realization that schools are on "the threshold of tremendous change," and the need for schools to achieve "better results."

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to compare the thinking about restructuring of educational theorists - those who write about restructuring - with the thinking of practitioners - teachers and administrators who are engaged in implementing restructuring.

Questionnaires were mailed to 43 theorists who were believed to have written an article, book, or paper about restructuring and to 178 schools that were believed to be engaged in restructuring efforts. Two questionnaires were mailed to each school - one for the principal and a second for a teacher who was involved in the restructuring effort at that school. Twenty-seven of the 43 theorists and 238 of the 356 practitioners representing 129 schools in 30 states provided useable returns.

A high percentage of the theorists (93%) and practitioners (70%) considered themselves to be above average or well above average in their knowledge of restructuring in public schools. Obviously, then, this was not a random sample of either group. We deliberately identified individuals who were likely to be knowledgeable about restructuring.

Not surprisingly, 94% of the practitioners indicated that they were currently involved in a specific effort to restructure public schools. Surprisingly, 67% of the theorists also said they were involved in a specific effort.

A plurality of theorists (40%) and a majority of practitioners (61%) identified one school as the focus of most restructuring efforts. Thus, this "movement" articulates a model of educational change that functions on a grass-roots, school-by-school basis. Such a model ascribes a major role to each school's principal and bypasses much of the district's bureaucracy. Some of the results speak to how well such a model works in practice, but it is interesting that such a model has not been employed widely, except for public alternative schools, in recent history. There is some evidence, to be discussed later, that such a model does evoke a great deal of enthusiasm and commitment from teachers and principals.

The remainder of this section of the report identifies important findings and discusses their implications. A good place to begin is with the difference between reform and restructuring.

Reform and Restructuring

When asked to indicate whether restructuring was "roughly the same" or "quite different" from reform, theorists were more evenly divided on the issue (37% checked "roughly the same" and 41%, "quite different"). Practitioners, however, selected "quite different" at a nearly 2 to 1 ratio (59% to 32%).

When asked to describe the differences, practitioners emphasized that 1) reform was piecemeal maintenance while restructuring was systemic change, 2) reform was mandated from without while restructuring was initiated from within a school, and 3) reform was top down, while restructuring occurred from the bottom up. The theorists were not as clear. Four agreed that reform was piecemeal and restructuring was systemic, but none of the theorists noted the other distinctions. Two theorists stated views that reversed the meaning of reform and restructuring articulated by the practitioners and four said the differences were mainly semantic.

This finding affirms the grassroots character of this movement; its leadership is diffuse and arises from the lowest levels in the school hierarchy. It gives teachers much more power than they typically have had to design, implement, and evaluate change. Surprisingly, principals who are involved in these efforts have the same positive responses because, although our data doesn't show it, they undoubtedly have more power in such an approach than they did under older change models. Practitioners have said for years that educational change should be tailored to the children and context of a particular school. This model provides the opportunity to do just that.

Needs, Problems, Issues

The vast majority of practitioners (87%) believe restructuring efforts are focused on specific needs, problems, or issues, but only 26% of the theorists feel this way. Implied in the theorists' responses is the idea that restructuring efforts may lack specific goals. This scarcely seems the case, however, since 92% of the practitioners and 85% of the theorists selected student achievement as the goal of such efforts. Certainly from written comments in other parts of the questionnaire, it is clear that theorists are less at ease with restructuring than practitioners are.

Many theorists (see Table 8) feel that its focus is on the wrong things - giving teachers better working conditions and a greater voice in decision making instead of student achievement - but our data do not bear out this criticism.

The issues varied from school to school, but such problems as low student achievement, meeting the needs of at-risk students and diverse student populations, and what one participant called "a lack of success with the old methods" were frequently cited.

Sources of Ideas

There was general agreement among practitioners (84%) and theorists (96%) that books and articles are the major source of ideas for restructuring. This finding dispels the widespread belief that teachers don't read. Whether they read more broadly or not, they do use professional journals as their primary source of ideas for restructuring. Our study also confirms the value of visits to other schools as a major source of ideas. A high percentage of theorists (85%) and a much lower percentage of practitioners (59%) assigned this their second major source of ideas. The tightly packed structure of a teacher's day, the culture of the two institutions, and the lack of travel funds may account for these differences. Theorists are more likely to obtain grants for travel and are more likely to have the time to do so.

Paradigms for Restructuring

When asked about the assumptions which guide restructuring, both groups hedge their bets. Fifty-eight percent of practitioners and 41% of theorists indicated that fixing the existing system (old paradigm) and developing new approaches to public schooling (new paradigm) were both useful. This appears to be a realistic assessment by both groups. Comments suggested that the ideal was a completely new model of schooling, but realism dictated the current model as the starting point. This reflects an age old argument about change: Do dramatically new models ever emerge from tinkering with the old ones, or do they require some kind of intuitive leap into the future? Our respondents have taken the safe course of saying, "Both." Only the future will reveal

whether it was the wise choice.

Goals of Restructuring

Except for student achievement, which was ranked the #1 goal by both groups, there is no common agreement about the goals of restructuring. Practitioners tend to view goals related to students - improved educational programs and improved student motivation/commitment - as the most frequent ones. Theorists, on the other hand, identify teacher autonomy and improved working conditions for teachers as goals that are next in line. This raises an interesting question: Are practitioners squeamish about expressing their needs and interests or are theorists that much out of touch with what is actually going on in schools? Perhaps one set of goals - those aimed at teachers - is instrumental to achieving the others, aimed at students. It is certainly clear from our data that teachers feel the need for a greater voice if they are ever going to improve schools for students. There is a sense of excitement and enthusiasm in their comments. Perhaps by making schools more responsive to the needs of teachers, we will also make them more responsive to the needs of the young.

Who Participates, Who Benefits

There is greater agreement between the two groups on this item than on almost any other. Both theorists and practitioners rank the same groups - teachers, school administrators, and district administrators among the most highly involved in restructuring. Two things are to be noted about this: all of these groups are professionals and two of the three are in individual school buildings where restructuring is expected to take place. Noted for their absence are parents and students who also have high stakes in the changes that are made.

Roughly speaking, the rankings of low level participation are mirror images of the high level rankings. Students are ranked #1, the community #3, and the school board #4 by theorists and practitioners.

The most discrepant rankings for low level participation are for parents - ranked second by

theorists and sixth by practitioners - and the media - ranked second by practitioners and fifth by theorists. We are more inclined to accept the judgment of practitioners since they are closer to the arenas of action, but they may be less objective about it as well. Should we believe those at a distance (theorists) who are likely to be more objective or those at the scene of action (practitioners) who have more at stake? The truth is of more than academic interest since many feel citizen involvement is absolutely essential for restructuring to succeed.

Both theorists (85%) and practitioners (95%) agree that teachers are one of the prime beneficiaries of restructuring. Students, ranked first by teachers (96%) and second by theorists (59%), are also seen to benefit most. It is interesting to note, however, that theorists were considerably less certain of this than they were of teachers as beneficiaries.

The finding that teachers are one of the prime beneficiaries may indicate why teachers, and even school administrators are so enthusiastic about restructuring. Teachers finally may be beginning to feel that they can make the kind of changes they believe to be productive for students. Perhaps this is why resources is identified as one of the key barriers by practitioners. If one adds resources to authority, responsibility, and autonomy, one has the needed ingredients for genuine accountability. Probably this is one of the few times, if not the only time in the eyes of teachers, that such a formula has been in place.

From their comments to other questions it is also clear that principals are in favor of such an arrangement. It means, of course, that they must share their power with their colleague teachers. While this might bring considerable anxiety early on, it may actually assist the principal in his (or her) representation of the school's plans to the central office. He/She no longer needs to fear that his/her efforts might be undermined by teachers, and the sense of isolation which both teachers and principals feel in their classrooms and offices respectively can now give way to a unified effort. Their united voices can speak with greater authority than ever before, especially if they have the parents behind them as well.

Reservations

Both theorists and practitioners had their reservations about restructuring. The single most important reservation for theorists focused on concerns about teaching and learning. The general thrust of their concerns was that restructuring was not focused squarely enough on improving teaching so that student learning would also improve. Their fear (our word not theirs) is that a focus on decision making, changes in roles and relationships, and on working conditions would distract practitioners from the more important work of heightened learning.

Teachers are less likely to see the dichotomy between means and ends. They have a sense that they know what the right moves are for students and that they have been kept from making them because of legislative and administrative mandates which have tied their hands. Greater control of decision making at the school level is important not for what it does in the short run but for what it will permit teachers (and principals) to do over a period of time. This is why it is so important to practitioners that restructuring be permitted to continue over an extended period of time. For the public and for some educators as well, patience wears thin quickly. Results are expected almost overnight. Practitioners are hopeful they will be given the time to separate the wheat from the chaff in restructuring. Perhaps this is also why they see restructuring as a continuous effort over many years.

The two biggest reservations for practitioners were success or the likelihood of failure (26%) and political/organizational obstacles (25%). These were the highest ranked items on the theorists' list as well. Many practitioners are worried that success will be judged through the lens of unrealistic expectations. In effect, they accuse their critics of looking at life through black colored glasses. A related fear is that too much emphasis will be given to the results of standardized tests and that other, more appropriate measures, will be overlooked. Theorists are much more bottom-line oriented. They want to see improvement in student learning. They are concerned that restructuring is activity for activity's sake - a mad scramble to do something that may or may not be successful. On the basis of perceptions, which is the only data we have to work with, the theorists may not have a case. Of 15 potential goals for restructuring, practitioners

ranked "greater student achievement" #1 and "improved educational programs" #2. They also ranked curriculum and instruction as the #1 focus (tied with decision making). As we observed earlier, the differences may be in higher expectations over a shorter time span for theorists.

We have already alluded to the political and organizational reservations. In the eyes of practitioners, individuals at the local, state, or federal level are likely to veto or otherwise counter their decisions before they are given time to work. There is a tendency for teachers and principals to take on the role of true believers who are not supported by parents and the public, central office and school boards (usually viewed as outsiders), by state legislatures, and by federal officials from the president on down. Given this observation, one wonders why practitioners don't make a greater effort to involve parents and community, the one group they would be most likely to influence.

Theorists are much more likely to attribute political and organizational difficulties to the naivete of practitioners than to the performance of local, state, and federal officials. They are also more likely to speak about "political forces," "powerbases," "governance," and "the school as an organization" without mentioning specific office holders.

New Understandings

Practitioners and theorists were asked to describe the ways their understanding of public schooling had changed as a result of thinking about and observing restructuring. Some members of each group said that it hadn't changed at all. Several practitioners spoke about a lack of contentment with old models or the need for new-paradigm thinking. Virtually all of the practitioners, of course, were actually engaged in the daily practice of restructuring and this experience made them even more aware than before of the essential need to think about schooling in new ways. None of the theorists mentioned this theme.

Site-based Management and Decision Making

Several practitioners (no theorists) mentioned site-based management or decision making as

areas in which they had acquired new understandings. Three sub-themes emerged in the analysis of decision making: 1) the importance of involving students and teachers, 2) the value of sharing decision making, and 3) the importance of moving decisions to the level of those affected by them. These ideas embody principles that enlightened business corporations have been exploring for some time.

Site-based management, of course, views the school, in contrast to the district, as the locus of decision making. By implication, site-based management espouses a change philosophy that emphasizes the importance of a building-by-building approach to educational innovation. It contrasts sharply with federal approaches such as the alphabet-soup approaches of the 1960's, state approaches, such as those of Tennessee and Kentucky, and the district approaches within several local systems.

The practitioners in this study would probably view the latter as mandated, top-down approaches which contrast sharply with the grass-roots, bottom-up approach they perceive restructuring to be. Because they are prime decision makers in restructuring, it is only natural that they feel they have learned something about decision making and site-based management. Among the things they have learned are the lack of preparation they (especially teachers) have had for the task, the amount of work involved, the sense of empowerment they acquire (in the "power" to, not "power over", sense), and the conviction that single schools can best serve their widely differing constituencies.

Collaborative Partnerships

Several practitioners and one theorist made comments that fit this category. Virtually all of these comments expressed the belief that schools could no longer work in isolation - that parents, businesses, and other members of the school's community are all valued stakeholders in reaching decisions about the mission of a school. While some who participated in restructuring learned important lessons about collaboration, many more did not even mention it, and when we examine all of the data available, we must conclude that most practitioners do not see much of a role in

restructuring for any group other than the professionals.

In communities where a great deal of trust exists between the public and its professional educators, the failure to include the public in decision making may not pose serious problems immediately, but neither will it ever be wholly satisfactory because it places the same burden on teachers and school principals that now rests on district officials and school boards that function without much lay participation. Sooner or later, without frequent and regular communication, trust will slip and doubts will creep in. Only collaboration will insure a strong and continuing base of support for each school's mission.

Learnings about the Change Process

Nearly half of the theorists and 15% of the practitioners said they reached a better understanding of change as a result of being involved in restructuring. These individuals were grouped into five categories with different perspectives on restructuring. The optimists have learned that change is needed and that it can be made to happen. They are hopeful about the future of public schooling. The essentialists sense that change is urgent, that it must happen if public schooling is to survive and remain credible with the public. The realists, who constitute the largest of the five groups, understand how slow and difficult educational change really is. They know it will take longer and require a greater investment of time, energy, and other resources than they originally thought. The smallest group, the cautionaries, which includes no theorists, express a wariness about change, reminding us that it is a two-edged sword. While some change is useful, some may be unnecessary or even destructive.

The pessimists, who are all theorists, introduce a sour note into the composition. They assert how impervious schools are to change and expect little to happen beyond cosmetic change as a result of restructuring. The practicing teachers and principals who responded to our questionnaire, are absent from this category. As a group, they are much more optimistic about restructuring. This finding has a certain utility because it is practitioners who must bring about change in public schools, and pessimism scarcely serves as an energizing force for such efforts.

Nor is this group of practitioners likely to be representative of the full range of teachers and principals in public schooling. They were chosen because we believed they were engaged in restructuring and probably lacked the pessimism or even cynicism that would have made such efforts difficult if not impossible. While we have no evidence on the vast majority of public school practitioners, we harbor suspicions that they are far less enthusiastic about restructuring than the practitioners within the sample.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
RESTRUCTURING SCHOOLS RESEARCH STUDY

Before responding, read accompanying letter for information.

Please complete all of the items as indicated:

1. Your age _____ 21-30 _____ 31-40 _____ 41-50

   _____ 51-60 _____ 60+

2. Your sex: _____ F _____ M

3. Your primary place of employment: _____ school system

   _____ college or university _____ other (specify)

   _____

4. Your primary role:

   _____ teacher _____ administrator _____ other (specify)

   _____

5. Are you involved in a specific effort to restructure public schools?

   _____ yes _____ no

6. If you answered yes to item 5, how would you describe your restructuring effort?

   _____ as a project with beginning and ending dates

   _____ as a continuing effort over several years

7. Have you written articles, papers, books, etc. about restructuring public schools?

   _____ yes _____ no

   If yes, please send copies or reprints under separate cover.

8. How knowledgeable do you consider yourself to be about restructuring public schools? Check one.

_____ well above average knowledge

_____ above average knowledge

_____ average knowledge

_____ below average knowledge

_____ well below average knowledge

9. Where are most public school restructuring efforts focused? Check only one.

_____ within a school

_____ within two or more schools

_____ across a district

_____ other (specify)

_____

10. What is the level of most public school restructuring efforts? Check only one.

_____ elementary

_____ elementary and middle/jr. high

_____ middle/jr. high

_____ middle/jr. high & high school

_____ high school

_____ other (specify)

_____

11. What have been the major sources of ideas for your thinking about restructuring public schools? Check all applicable answers.

_____ articles, books, etc.

_____ colleague teachers

_____ school administrators

_____ district administrators

_____ state education department

_____ consultants

_____ schools doing restructuring

_____ other (specify)

_____

12. Are most restructuring efforts in public schools developed in response to specific needs, problems, or issues?

_____ yes _____ no

If yes, please specify some of them. _____

_____

_____

13. Below is a list of possible goals for restructuring public schools. Check all those that are most likely to be the goals of actual restructuring efforts.

_____ greater student achievement

_____ greater student involvement

_____ greater teacher power or autonomy

_____ creation of smaller schools and school programs

_____ improved educational programs

_____ greater authority for the school (vs. the district)

_____ improved working conditions for teachers

_____ broader governance structure for the school

_____ changing roles and functions of the central office

_____ improved student motivation/commitment

_____ improved teacher motivation/commitment

_____ improved parent motivation/commitment

_____ improved administrator motivation/commitment

_____ greater community involvement

_____ others goals

_____ _____

_____ _____

14. What is the focus of most restructuring efforts? Check all that apply.

_____ curriculum and instruction

_____ roles and relationships of students, teachers and administrators

_____ decision making

_____ resource allocation

_____ grouping, tracking, grade levels

_____ assumptions, beliefs, values

_____ distribution of power and influence

_____ distribution and use of time, periods, etc.

_____ computers and other forms of technology

_____ school within a school programs

_____ professional working conditions

_____ other (specify) _____

_____

15. Below is a list of people who might benefit from restructuring. In the left hand column, check all of those who are likely to benefit <u>most</u>. In the right hand column, check all of those who might benefit <u>least</u>. Do not check the same group in both columns.

Benefit most		Benefit least
_____	students	_____
_____	parents and community	_____
_____	teachers	_____
_____	school administrators	_____
_____	district administrators	_____
_____	board members	_____
_____	unions/professional organizations	_____
_____	other (specify)	_____

16 Check all of the barriers below that have made it difficult for restructuring efforts to succeed.

_____ beliefs, thoughts, values of persons involved

_____ beliefs, thoughts, values of persons not involved

_____ administrative barriers

_____ school board policies, attitudes, etc.

_____ state education department rules and regulations

_____ organizational barriers in the school or district

_____ resource barriers

_____ other barriers (specify) _____

_____

_____

17. How would you characterize the success of restructuring efforts at this point? Check only one.

_____ success is promising but not yet realized

_____ success is clear but limited

_____ success is definite and extensive

_____ success has transformed schools (districts)

_____ other (specify) _____

_____

18. How does restructuring compare with reform?

_____ They are roughly the same

_____ They are quite different (Describe the differences.)

_____

_____

_____

19. Which of the following assumptions appear to provide a foundation for restructuring public schools. Check only one.

_____ to revise, refine, or improve models (paradigms) of public schooling

_____ to develop new models (paradigms) of public schooling

_____ both of the above

_____ neither of the above

If neither, please specify your understanding of the assumptions that provide a foundation for restructuring.

_____

_____

_____

20. From your knowledge of restructuring, rate the involvement of each of the groups below in restructuring public schools by checking the appropriate space.

	INVOLVEMENT				
	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Parents					
Students					
Teachers					
School Administrators					
District Administrators					
Board Members					
Union Officials					
Community Members					
Business Leaders					
Media					

21. What is/are your greatest reservation(s) with respect to restructuring? Describe it (them) as specifically as possible.

_____

_____

_____

_____

22. In what ways has thinking about and observing restructuring efforts changed your understanding of public schooling?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix B

Participation of Groups
Practitioners' Ratings

Group	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very high
Parents (Responses)	38	64	79	36	19
Parents (Percent of Total)	15.97%	26.89%	33.19%	15.13%	7.98%
Students (Responses)	42	84	53	35	23
Students (Percent of Total)	17.65%	35.29%	22.27%	14.71%	9.66%
Teachers (Responses)	0	5	34	88	110
Teachers (Percent of Total)	0.00%	2.10%	14.29%	36.97%	46.22%
Sch. Admin. (Responses)	1	8	30	97	99
Sch. Admin. (Percent of Total)	0.42%	3.36%	12.61%	40.76%	41.60%
Dist. Admin. (Responses)	10	45	72	72	37
Dist. Admin. (Percent of Total)	4.20%	18.91%	30.25%	30.25%	15.55%
Bd. Members (Responses)	28	77	77	36	15
Bd. Members (Percent of Total)	11.76%	32.35%	32.35%	15.13%	6.30%
Union Officials (Responses)	34	67	62	45	18
Union Officials (Percent of Total)	14.29%	28.15%	26.05%	18.91%	7.56%
Comm. Members (Responses)	27	80	76	40	10
Comm. Members (Percent of Total)	11.34%	33.61%	31.93%	16.81%	4.20%
Business Leaders (Responses)	30	73	58	52	22
Business Leaders (Percent of Total)	12.61%	30.67%	24.37%	21.85%	9.24%
Media (Responses)	40	80	72	33	9
Media (Percent of Total)	16.81%	33.61%	30.25%	13.87%	3.78%

Appendix C

Participation of Groups
Theorists' Ratings

Group	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very high
Parents (Responses)	7	10	5	1	1
Parents (Percent of Total)	25.93%	37.04%	18.52%	3.70%	3.70%
Students (Responses)	13	8	2	1	0
Students (Percent of Total)	48.15%	29.63%	7.41%	3.70%	0.00%
Teachers (Responses)	1	3	7	10	3
Teachers (Percent of Total)	3.70%	11.11%	25.93%	37.04%	11.11%
Sch. Admin. (Responses)	3	2	8	8	3
Sch. Admin. (Percent of Total)	11.11%	7.41%	29.63%	29.63%	11.11%
Dist. Admin. (Responses)	3	5	7	8	1
Dist. Admin. (Percent of Total)	11.11%	18.52%	25.93%	29.63%	3.70%
Bd. Members (Responses)	6	10	7	1	0
Bd. Members (Percent of Total)	22.22%	37.04%	25.93%	3.70%	0.00%
Union Officials (Responses)	6	4	8	4	1
Union Officials (Percent of Total)	22.22%	14.81%	29.63%	14.81%	3.70%
Comm. Members (Responses)	6	11	6	1	0
Comm. Members (Percent of Total)	22.22%	40.74%	22.22%	3.70%	0.00%
Business Leaders (Responses)	5	6	10	2	1
Business Leaders (Percent of Total)	18.52%	22.22%	37.04%	7.41%	3.70%
Media (Responses)	4	9	8	3	0
Media (Percent of Total)	14.81%	33.33%	29.63%	11.11%	0.00%